

BEYOND THE "YEAR OF SONG": TEXT AND MUSIC IN THE  
SONG CYCLES OF ROBERT SCHUMANN AFTER 1848

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In recent years scholars have begun to re-evaluate the works, writings, and life of Robert Schumann (1810-1856). One of the primary issues in this ongoing re-evaluation is a reassessment of the composer's late works (roughly defined as those written after 1845). Until recently, the last eight years of Schumann's creative life and the works he composed at that time either have been ignored or critiqued under an image of an illness that had caused periodic breakdowns. Schumann's late works show how his culture and the artists communicating within that culture were transformed from the beginning to the middle of the nineteenth century. These late works, therefore, should be viewed in the context of Schumann's output as a whole and in regard to their contributions to nineteenth-century society.

Schumann's contributions, specifically to the genre of the song cycle from 1849 to 1852, are among his late compositional works that still await full reconsideration. A topical study, focusing on three themes of selections from his twenty-three late cycles, will provide a critical evaluation of Schumann's compositional output in the genre of the song cycle. First, Schumann's political voice will be examined. The political events that led to the mid-nineteenth-century revolutions inspired crucial changes in European life and the art produced at that time. Schumann took an active role through his artistic contributions in which he exercised his political voice in responding to these changing events. Second, Schumann's storytelling voice will be explored. In the nineteenth century, storytellers remembered past events in order to comment on social and political

issues of their own day. Schumann's storytelling voice allowed him to embrace a change in his own musical style and message in several late cycles. Third, Schumann's (relational) feminist voice will be considered. In two late cycles Schumann featured historical women: Elisabeth Kulmann (1808-1825), a Russian poet, and Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-1587). In both of these cycles, Schumann closely associated these women's lives with their work and appreciated their strength and their abilities to transcend their earthly burdens.

These late song cycles not only allow us to fully appreciate a large part of Schumann's late-compositional oeuvre, but they also provide us a better understanding of the mid-century German culture from this artist's perspective. The method by which Schumann communicated with his audiences—one so different from that of the 1840-songs—is as significant as the messages he hoped to communicate. Schumann's experiences leading up to 1848 had changed him as a man and as a musician. Through his late song cycles, Schumann communicated his ideas about the transformation that happened within himself, his audiences, and the German culture and proposed ways to resolve the many conflicts that existed.

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## PREFACE

This document is organized in five chapters, beginning with an introductory chapter that presents the problem of Schumann research that I will address in the rest of the document. Chapter 1 begins by reviewing the state of research concerning Robert Schumann's late song cycles. After establishing that there is a severe lacuna in research regarding Schumann's late song cycles, I will address this issue by analyzing specific song cycles composed after 1848. Central to this analysis is the belief that Schumann exercised various voices and personae throughout his late works that spoke to important issues and relayed specific ideas that he wished to convey to his mid-nineteenth-century audiences. The concept of voicedness is inspired by Edward T. Cone's *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974) and will be explained in Chapter 1.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 address specific personae of Schumann's late compositional voice that resonated clearly in the late song cycles. First, I address his political voice and analyze specific song cycles composed during and after the mid-century revolutions that showed his concern for political change. Second, I explore Schumann's storytelling voice and examine how his compositional style changed as a result of a changing cultural environment and a completely different audience from the one for whom he wrote around 1840. Third, I examine Schumann's exploration of the female voice and explore two cycles that feature women exclusively. Schumann's (relational) feminist tendencies have been overlooked in the scholarly literature to date.

The final chapter addresses the responsibility of remembering and, inspired by the works of John Daverio, urges the reader to remember the *whole* Schumann—not

just the piano composer of the 1830s or the song composer of 1840—but the composer whose most prolific year and, perhaps, most important ideas occurred after 1848.

Schumann identified his song cycles in several different ways including “Liederspiel,” “Gesänge,” “Lieder,” “Minnespiel,” “Liebeslieder,” “Gedichte,” and “Balladen.” These designations will be explored in specific cases. Throughout this document, I use the generic terms “song” and “song cycles.”

All musical examples were taken from the Clara Schumann Editions originally published in Leipzig by Breitkopf and Härtel. Measure numbers in brackets are supplied for the convenience of the reader. The German texts for each song discussed were taken from the Clara Schumann Editions as well. Translations for any text provided in German follow in parenthesis. The list of musical examples (p. v) contains the song incipit in quotation marks followed by the title of the song in parenthesis if the title differs from the first words of the song.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, scholars have begun to re-evaluate the works, writings, and life of Robert Schumann. This recrudescence has been facilitated not least of all by the initiation of a new critical edition of Schumann's complete compositional output, an initiative that in turn was made possible by the establishment of the Robert-Schumann-Forschungsstelle in Düsseldorf by Akio Mayeda in 1986. One avenue of this important re-evaluation includes the great strides scholars have made in understanding Schumann's compositional processes and the primary sources that document the gestation and completion of many of his works.<sup>1</sup> Equally important studies have contributed to our assessment of Schumann as reader of literature,<sup>2</sup> the composer's

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Linda Correll Roesner, "The Sources for Schumann's *Davidsbündlertänze*, Op. 6: Composition, Textual Problems, and the Role of the Composer as Editor" in *Mendelssohn and Schumann: Essays on their Music and its Context*, ed. By Jon W. Finson and R. Larry Todd (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1984), 53-70; Rufus Hallmark, *The Genesis of Schumann's Dichterliebe* (Ann Arbor: UMI Press, 1976); Jon W. Finson, *Robert Schumann and the Study of Orchestral Composition: The Genesis of the First Symphony op. 38* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). For a study of the genesis of some of Schumann's choral works, see Gregory W. Harwood, *The Genesis of Robert Schumann's Liturgical Works and a Study of Compositional Process in the Requiem, Op. 148*, Ph.D. Dissertation (New York University, 1991). For information on the genesis of Schumann's *Album für die Jugend*, Op. 68 see Bernhard R. Appel, "'Actually, Taken Directly from Family Life': Robert Schumann's *Album für die Jugend*" trans. John Michael Cooper in *Schumann and His World* ed. R. Larry Todd (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 171-204.

<sup>2</sup> See Rufus Hallmark, "Robert Schumann: The Poet Sings," in *German Songs in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (New York: Schirmer, 1996), 75-118 in which he examines Schumann's Songs in terms of the poetry that Schumann chooses to set. Hallmark divides the Songs into three categories and examines them in four sub-categories according to the text: lyric, dramatic, narrative, and folk poetry. Also see John W. Finson, "Schumann and Shakespeare," in *Mendelssohn and Schumann: Essays on Their Music and Its Context*, ed. Jon W. Finson and R. Larry Todd (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1984), 125-136 in which he examines Schumann's use of Shakespearean dramatic models in his musical works; Lora Deahl, "Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana* and Double Novel Structure," *International Journal of Musicology* 5 (1996): 131-145, in which she compares musical structure to literary structure showing how Schumann understood E.T.A. Hoffmann; Eric Frederick Jensen, "Explicating Jean Paul: Robert Schumann's Program for *Papillons*, Op. 2," *Nineteenth Century Music* 22 no. 2 (Fall 1998): 127-143 for an extensive discussion of Schumann's love and knowledge of Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre*. In reference to Schumann's use of the works of Goethe, see Helmut Loos, "Johann Wolfgang von Goethes Faust in der Musik: Schumann, Liszt, Mahler," *Festschrift für Winfried Kirsch zum 65 Geburtstag* (Tutzing, Germany: Schneider): 280-302.

work in the context of nineteenth century aesthetics,<sup>3</sup> and his cultivation of certain specific genres.<sup>4</sup> A reassessment of biographical facts has taken place with the help of a close examination of nineteenth-century writings and criticism that are readily available.<sup>5</sup> In 2003, Margit L. McCorkle published her much-anticipated *Thematic-Bibliographical Catalogue of the Works*,<sup>6</sup> a resource that provides essential information about each composition's history and sources and affords easy navigability through Schumann's compositional oeuvre.

One of the primary issues in this ongoing re-evaluation of Schumann's output is a reassessment of the composer's late works (roughly defined as those written after 1845). Until recently, the last eight years of Schumann's creative life and the works he composed at that time either were ignored or were studied under an image of an illness that had caused periodic breakdowns throughout the composer's life. Peter Ostwald, for instance, writes about Schumann's "psychotic behavior" and begins his 1985

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<sup>3</sup> Two important monographs appeared (1984 and 1994) and inspired a more contextual approach to the life and works of Robert Schumann. First, Jon W. Finson and R. Larry Todd, eds., *Mendelssohn and Schumann: Essays on Their Music and Its Context*. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1984) is divided into four sections: Contemporary Criticism, Compositional Process, Contextual Studies, and Literary Influences. Ten years later a second important study appeared: R. Larry Todd, ed., *Schumann and his World* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994) which is divided into three sections: essays, nineteenth-century letters and memoirs, and nineteenth- and early twentieth-century criticism.

<sup>4</sup> See Reinhold Dusella, "Symphonisches in den Skizzenbüchern Schumanns," in *Probleme der symphonischen Tradition im 19. Jahrhundert* ed. Siegfried Kross (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1990), 203-24; John Daverio, "Schumann's 'New Genre for the Concert Hall': *Das Paradies und die Peri* in the Eyes of a Contemporary," in *Schumann and his World* ed. R. Larry Todd (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 129-155. For a study of Schumann's piano music, see Anthony Newcomb, "Schumann and the Marketplace: From Butterflies to Hausmusik," in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music* ed. R. Larry Todd (New York: Schirmer, 1990), 258-315. For a look at Schumann's transition to the genre of song, see Barbara Turchin, "Schumann's Conversion to Vocal Music: A Reconsideration," *Musical Quarterly* 67 (1981): 392-404.

<sup>5</sup> See John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age"* (New York: Oxford, 1997) and Eric Frederick Jensen, *Schumann* (Oxford and New York: Oxford, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> See Margit L. McCorkle, *Thematic-Bibliographical Catalogue of the Works* (Mainz: Schott, 2003).

monograph with a chapter entitled, “Crisis, 1854.”<sup>7</sup> More recently, however, scholars have argued that Schumann’s illness did not impede his creative ability, and that his mental state should not adversely influence interpretation of the works composed after 1845.<sup>8</sup> Instead, these recent scholars have suggested, the late works should be viewed in the context of Schumann’s output as a whole and in that of the general artistic production of the mid-nineteenth century.

Schumann’s late contributions to the genre of the song cycle are among the facets of Schumann’s late compositional output that still awaits a full reconsideration.<sup>9</sup> The celebrated *Liederjahr* of 1840,<sup>10</sup> during which he composed around 125 Songs, continues to receive scholarly consideration in terms of its connection to Schumann’s

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<sup>7</sup> See Peter Ostwald, *Schumann: The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1985) pp. xi and 1. Instead of examining the music first, Ostwald writes through the lens of Schumann’s illness. The chapters in his book are: 1. Crisis, 1854, 2. A Vulnerable Personality, 1809-1828, 3. Challenges and Opportunities, 1828-1829, 4. Metamorphosis, 1829-1830, 5. A New Beginning, 1830-1831, 6. Cumulative Stresses, 1831-1833, 7. Breakdown and Aftermath, 1833-1835, 8. The Road to Maturity, 1835-1837, 9. Symbolic Union with Clara, 1837-1839, 10. Delays before Marriage, 1839-1840, 11. Harmony and Discord, 1840-1844, 12. Engulfing Depressions, 1844-1845, 13. Plateau, 1845-1849, 14. Trouble on the Horizon, 1849-1852, 15. Incipient Madness, 1852-1854, 16. Enderich, 1854-1856, 17. The Problem of Diagnosis.

<sup>8</sup> A leader in this revisionist view was John Daverio, whose 1997 Schumann biography motivated the re-evaluation of Schumann’s late works. Especially significant to this important work is the fact that Daverio devoted four out of twelve chapters to Schumann’s late compositions, and he did not allow Schumann’s mental state to unduly influence his study of the late compositions.

<sup>9</sup> On June 13 and 14, 1991, there was a meeting of the International Schumann Symposium during which several papers were read regarding Schumann and his poets. During this conference, papers focused on Op. 117, Elizabeth Kulmann (Opp. 103 and 104) Op. 122, and Emanuel Geibel (Opp. 74, 79, 138, and 51). See *Schumann-Forschungen*, Schumann und seine Dichter, Bericht über das 4. Internationale Schumann-Symposium am 13. und 14. Juni 1991 im Rahmen des 4. Schumann-Festes, hg. von Matthias Wendt, Mainz 1993. In addition, see the important work of Ulrich Mahler who has written articles on Opp. 79, 104, and 89 and has done general work on Schumann’s late works. See, especially, his dissertation on the late songs of Schumann in reference to post-1848 song aesthetic. And, finally, see Rufus Hallmark’s work, especially his division of the songs into three categories (early, middle, and late) in his article, “Robert Schumann: The Poet Sings” in *German Songs in the Nineteenth Century* ed. Rufus Hallmark (New York: Schirmer, 1996), 75-118.

<sup>10</sup> “Liederjahr” may be misleading. May 1840-September 1841 marks the time from the composition of the Heine *Liederkreis*, Op. 24 to the Rückert Songs, Op. 37. There are references to new song compositions in letters to Clara from the fall of 1839. From May 1840 to September 1841, Schumann published about one third of the two hundred songs that he composed from the fall, 1839 to January 1841. The rest were published during years following this time, mainly for financial reasons. See Rufus Hallmark’s “Robert Schumann: The Poet Sings,” Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, pp. 202-203.

relationship to Clara and its marketability. These middle-period songs also provide evidence of Schumann's ability to unite music and poetry as well as voice and piano. Furthermore, while the compositions of the *Liederjahr* have been extensively and meticulously analyzed from a variety of musical and textural/interpretive perspectives,<sup>11</sup> the song cycles Schumann composed from 1849 to 1852 (Figure 1.1), remain largely unconsidered; those scholars who have discussed them seem not to have taken their potential for artistic merit seriously.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See Berthold Hoeckner, "Poet's Love and Composer's Love," *Music Theory Online* 7 no. 5 (October 2001): 1.1-3.11; David Ferris, "Analyzing *Dichterliebe*," in *Schumann's Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle* (Oxford and New York: Oxford, 2000), 25-58; Rufus Hallmark, "Robert Schumann: The Poet Sings," in *German Songs in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (New York: Schirmer, 1996); Edward T. Cone, "Poet's Love or Composer's Love," in *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries* ed. Steven Paul Scher (New York: Cambridge, 1992), 177-192; Nicholas Marston, "Schumann's Monument to Beethoven," *Nineteenth Century Music* 14 no. 3 (Spring 1991): 247-264; Kristina Muxfeldt, "Frauenliebe und Leben Now and Then," *Nineteenth Century Music* 25 no. 1 (Summer, 2001): 27-48; Matthias Walz, "Frauenliebe und -leben op. 42: Biedermeierdichtung, Zykluskonstruktion und musikalische Lyrik" in *Schumann-Studien* vol. 5 (1996), 97-118; Ruth Solie, "Whose Life? The Gendered Self in Schumann's Frauenliebe Songs," in *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries* ed. Steven Paul Scher (New York: Cambridge, 1992), 219-240; Martin Bresnick, "Convention and the Hermetic in Schumann's Frauenliebe und Leben" in *Convention in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Music: Essays in Honor of Leonard G. Ratner* (Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon, 1992), 173-193.

<sup>12</sup> See, especially, Eric Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann* (London: Methuen and Co., 1969), 278, in which he writes, "The evidence of the songs is plain. Schumann never again reached or even approached the level of his 1840 masterpieces. The songs of 1849 are a decline; the later ones a descent, first steep and then precipitous. It would be very surprising if the music as a whole showed a different pattern; nor does it by general consensus. Other composers of comparable stature are believed to mature in their music; Schumann appears to deteriorate." Also see Astra Desmond, *Schumann Songs* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972) who wrote, "The flame was now dying down..." on p. 59.

Figure 1.1. Song Cycles from 1849 to 1852

## 1849

- Op. 74, *Spanisches Liederspiel* (various Spanish poets)
- Op. 78, *Vier Duette* (Rückert, Kerner, Goethe, Hebbel, C. Schad (altered by RS))
- Op. 79, *Lieder-Album für die Jugend* (Fallersleben, Geibel, Uhland, Overbeck, Kletke, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, Hebbel, Andersen, Goethe, Schiller, Mörike)
- Op. 95, *Gesänge aus Lord Byrons "Hebräischen Gesänge"* (Byron: *Hebrew Melodies*, trans. Körner)
- Op. 98a, *Lieder und Gesänge aus Wilhelm Meister* (Goethe)
- Op. 101, *Minnespiel* (Rückert)
- Op. 106, *Schön Hedwig* (declamation and piano) (Hebbel)
- Op. 138, *Spanische Liebeslieder* (Geibel)

## 1850

- Op. 51, *Lieder und Gesänge* (Geibel, Rückert, Christern, Immermann, Goethe)
- Op. 83, *Drei Gesänge* (Buddeus, Rückert, Eichendorff)
- Op. 87, *Der Handschuh* (Schiller)
- Op. 89, *Sechs Gesänge von Wilfried von der Neun*
- Op. 90, *Sechs Gedichte von N. Lenau und Requiem*
- Op. 96, *Lieder und Gesänge* (Goethe, A. von Platen, Neun)

## 1851

- Op. 103, *Mädchenlieder von E. Kulmann*
- Op. 104, *Sieben Lieder von E. Kulmann*
- Op. 107, *Sechs Gesänge* (Ullrich, Mörike, Heyse, Müller, Kinkel)
- Op. 117, *Vier Husarenlieder von N. Lenau*
- Op. 119, *Drei Gedichte aus den Waldliedern von Pfarrius*
- Op. 125, *Fünf heitre Gesänge* (1850-51) (Buddeus, Candidus, Mörike, Braun, Heyse)

## 1852

- Op. 122, *Zwei Balladen: Ballade vom Haideknaben and Die Flüchtlinge* (declamation and piano) (1852-53) (Hebbel, P.B. Shelley/trans. Julius Seybt)
- Op. 135, *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart* (trans. G. Vincke and by him for various poems)
- Op. 139, *From Des Sängers Fluch* (R. Pohl, after Uhland)

What is promising, however, is the citing of several of the late cycles in Helmut Schanze's introduction to one important volume of the new edition of the complete works, *Literary Text used in Solo Songs, Part Songs, and Works for Vocal Declamation*. This volume is critical to a re-evaluation of the late song cycles because it examines how Schumann conceived a song cycle (introduction), provides information about the poets in every song he composed, and compares the literary text to the song text.<sup>13</sup> In the spirit of this re-evaluation, the time is ideal to reconsider the late song cycles fully. A thorough study of these important works will help to bring latter-day understanding of Schumann's contributions to the genre of the art song up to date with the knowledge gained in the ongoing reassessment of other aspects of his creative output.<sup>14</sup>

The songs and song cycles that Schumann composed may, in fact, be divided into three distinct categories: early (1827-28), middle (1840-1841) and late (1849-52). In 1827 and 1828, Schumann composed at least thirteen songs (Table 1.1).

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<sup>13</sup> Helmut Schanze, ed., with the assistance of Krischan Schulte, *Literary Text used in Solo Songs, Part Songs, and Works for Vocal Declamation*, Series VIII: Supplements Volume 2 (Mainz: Schott, 2002).

<sup>14</sup> An issue that will pervade this examination is Schumann's late compositional style and the fact that he was aware of and in control of a change in his own compositional style. The "new manner" that he described in 1846 was conscious and deliberate and affected his music in terms of conception, inspiration, and notion of the musical idea itself. He writes about a "new manner of composing" in *Tagebuch* 2 p. 402.



Table 1.1. Early Songs

Incipit/Title	Text	Composed/ Published
“Wenn der Winter sonst entschwand” (Verwandlung)	E. Schulze	1827/---
“Leicht wie gaukelnde Sylphiden” (Lied für XXX)	Schumann	1827/---
“Sterne der blauen himmlischen Auen” (Sehnsucht)	Schumann	1827/1933
“Ich sah dich weinen!” (Die Weinende)	Byron, trans.	1827/1933
“Glück der Engel!” (Erinnerung)	J. G. Jacobi	1828/1933
“Ich bin im Mai gegangen” (Kurzes Erwachen)	J. Kerner	1828/1933
“Könnt’ ich einmal wieder singen” (Gesanges Erwachen)	Kerner	1828/1933
“Lange harrt ich” (An Anna I)	Kerner	1828/1933
“Nicht im Tale” (An Anna II)	Kerner	1828/1893
“Zieh nur, du Sonne” (Im Herbst)	Kerner	1828/1893
“Bin nur ein armer Hirtenknab” (Hirtenknabe)	Schumann	1828/1893
“Das Wasser rauscht, das Wasser schwoll” (Der Fischer)	Goethe	1828/1933
(Klage) [lost]	Jacobi	1828/---

Although some of these songs found their way into later cycles,<sup>15</sup> most were published only posthumously. During this early period of song composition Schumann set texts written by himself, Lord Byron (1788-1824), Justinus Kerner (1786-1862), and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). In general, these early songs are in simple forms and contain an unobtrusive piano part. In “An Anna (II)” (1828), for instance, Schumann sets the poetry of Justinus Kerner. The song is in a simple ternary form with the “A” section repeating almost exactly at the end. The piano accompaniment does not interrupt or interfere, nor does it actively interpret the text, as one will hear in songs from 1840. On the other hand, this song provides a glimpse into some of the harmonically

<sup>15</sup> The first six of the 11 songs were later published as Woo 21 as *Sechs frühe Lieder* in 1933. “An Anna II” was used in Op. 11, “Im Herbst” was used in Op. 22, and “Hirtenknabe” was used in Op. 4 No. 4.

innovative features heard in the songs from around 1840 and, again, from 1849 to 1852.<sup>16</sup> This first chapter of song composition is significant, because it shows the early stages of the development of the compositional style in which Schumann demonstrated such proficiency in 1840 and then, again, in 1849.

By the time Schumann returned to song composition in 1849, much had happened both in his own life and in European cultural and political life that influenced the composer as a creative artist. In the 1840s, Schumann started a family<sup>17</sup> and began a career as a conductor,<sup>18</sup> critic, and composer. Finally, when Clara and Robert returned to Leipzig from a concert tour in Russia in 1844, Schumann resigned as editor of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* to allow more time for his own creative activities. After a move to Dresden (1844), Schumann taught Clara counterpoint (1845), studied the music of Sebastian Bach, and composed fugues—a series of events that substantively influenced his compositional style as well as his awareness of his musical and historical past.

While Schumann adjusted to life in Dresden, the political climate grew increasingly unstable. The seeds of the political uprisings that occurred around the mid-nineteenth century were planted as far back as the years leading up to the French

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<sup>16</sup> For instance, the voice begins with a dissonant b<sup>1</sup> (natural) against F-major harmonies on the first beat of m. 2, which resolves to a c<sup>1</sup> on the second beat. Also noteworthy is the sudden modulation to D-flat major in the “B” section (F, D-flat, E-flat minor, A-flat 7 in three beats). During the “B” section, Schumann creates a lovely duet between the voice and the left hand of the piano as the right hand provides steady chordal accompaniment.

<sup>17</sup> By 1843, the Schumanns had two daughters and by 1846, they had four children. In 1848, their second son was born. By 1849, the year that Robert and Clara fled Dresden because of the outbreak of revolution, Clara was pregnant again.

<sup>18</sup> In 1843, Schumann made his debut as a conductor in Leipzig, conducting his own oratorio, *Das Paradies und die Peri*. The reception of Schumann as a conductor was never favorable even in the beginning. Furthermore, he apparently did not have a positive reputation as a teacher at the Leipzig conservatory where he taught during this time.

Revolution (1789-92).<sup>19</sup> These political and biographical events make the consideration of the late songs different from that of earlier ones. One reason for this is simply Schumann's biographical and compositional experiences from 1841-1849. In this vein, one must consider experience as part of the compositional process while, at the same time, consider the musical work as a text with a non-specific meaning. This text may be examined in three ways: the relationship between a text (musical work) and the experiences of the (composer); the text as the poet's own written word; and the relationship between the text and outside events, the composer's desire to communicate his/her ideas about outside events, and the target audience for these ideas.

Voicedness and experience are two important criteria to understanding a text in these three ways. First, the idea of voicedness, or an author (composer) using various voices in works to communicate specific ideas, is one that pervades the late songs of Schumann.<sup>20</sup> He spoke to his audiences sometimes as a political activist, sometimes as a storyteller, and sometimes as a (relational) feminist to name but a few. The stylistic changes that are so obvious in the late songs are a direct result of the particular voice Schumann wished to sound and the specific idea(s) that he wished to convey.

The songs that Schumann composed after 1848 are not ones that may be understood

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<sup>19</sup> See Bernard Isaacs, *The Revolution of 1848-1849: Articles from the Neue Rheinische Zeitung by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels* (New York: International Publishers, 1972); William Maehl, *Germany in Western Civilization* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1979), 281-372; Priscilla Robertson, *Revolutions of 1848: A Social History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952 (renewed 1980)), 107-168; Brendan Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany, 1779-1850* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); Rudolph Stadelmann, *Social and Political History of the German: 1848 Revolution*, trans. James G. Chastain (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1975); Andrew Lees, *Revolution and Reflection* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974); Louis L. Snyder, *Roots of German Nationalism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978); Alexander Ringer, ed., *The Early Romantic Era between Revolutions: 1789-1848* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990).

<sup>20</sup> See Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

under one set of analytical tools. Instead, each cycle must be considered in its specific context with careful consideration of the specific voice Schumann wished to use.

The second criterion is that of experience. In German, there are two words used to convey the idea of “experience”: *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*. *Erlebnis* is used to describe an immediate experience that a person lives through without a full realization of the implications (benefits or destructions) of that experience. *Erfahrung*, on the other hand, is a gained or learned experience. This is the experience one has in the aftermath of an immediate event. *Erfahrung* is the kind of experience that is important when one analyzes the late songs of Schumann.<sup>21</sup>

The study of relationships and the discovery of connections between the musical work and outside elements is the key to fully understanding the music of Robert Schumann. This statement applies to Schumann’s entire output, especially the late songs. For Schumann, his music was more than the notes on the page; it was how those notes related to outside elements and participated in a complex web of meaning. To dismiss the late songs is to eliminate any possibility of a thorough knowledge of Schumann’s entire oeuvre.

### Premises and Methods

To know the late songs, one must consider these compositions as texts that have the ability to communicate and that this communication may be understood in several

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<sup>21</sup> See John Daverio, “Epilogue: Crossing Paths and Modes of Experience,” in *Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 243-250; Walter Benjamin “On Some Motifs in Baudelaire,” in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings* Volume 4 1938-1940, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Others (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2003), 313-355.

different ways.<sup>22</sup> Each reader of a particular text understands the various directions a text will take in a variety of ways. The various directions directly relate to the text's meaning eventually discovered. In this way of thinking, it is helpful to take a topical approach to the late songs and examine them as a body of works that communicate with each other as well as with outside sources. A central issue to accept is that a work may have multiple meanings and that the author (composer) is not responsible for these meanings. A reader (listener) interprets the text (music work) in various ways in relation to his or her own experiences and to the experiences of the author around the time of composition. At the same time, however, the work itself has taken on a life of its own after the composer releases that work for publication. The infinite life of a composition does not necessarily diminish the authority of the author, but it does assume a significant empowerment of the reader.

The objective reader of the late song cycles of Robert Schumann may define meaning in various ways, and the definition of the word meaning is critical to the present study. Part of the problem that recent Schumann scholars have overcome is the assumption that meaning is pre-determined in any piece that Schumann composed after 1845. Specifically, meaning was something that was understood only by accepting

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<sup>22</sup> Literary theorist Roland Barthes made an important distinction between the terms "work" and "text." See especially Barthes' essay, "Theory of the Text" in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader* ed. Robert Young (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981): 31-47. In this essay, Barthes argued that "[the text] is the fabric of the words which make up the work and which are arranged in such a way as to impose a meaning which is stable and as far as possible unique" (32). A "work" is a fixed entity with a single meaning that the reader must attempt to discover. The reader of a "work" attempts to uncover *the* meaning, which was fixed by the creator at the time of creation. A "text," on the other hand, does not have a fixed meaning. Instead, a "text" may have multiple meanings, which materialize in various ways depending on who reads the text at a given time. From the Latin "to weave" or "woven," a text is a fabric of multiple signs, which communicate with each other as well as elements outside of that text. While "work" or "artwork" may be used, this study will treat pieces discussed as "texts" at all times. Also see Graham Allen, "The Text Unbound: Barthes," in *Intertextuality* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 61-94.

that the composer's mind and creative capabilities were quickly deteriorating. Meaning in these late works, however, takes on a different guise when one approaches these works objectively. For instance, meaning is revealed when the reader understands and takes into account the chaotic time during which the composer lived. Additionally, meaning is discovered through intricate associations that exist within the individual songs of these cycles and among the cycles themselves. Sometimes meaning may be stable and other times meaning may be radically unstable. The present study will include, but not be limited to structuralist and post-structuralist approaches to uncover these webs of meaning.

The structuralist approach recognizes that a work contains stable aspects that are experience- and time-specific. These stable aspects may relate to the time period the work was created and to certain cultural aspects that make that work's interpretation distinctive. Alternatively, the post-structuralist approach explores an artwork with the realization and expectation that the work possesses no stable meaning and that the work itself is a text, which may become a common jumping-off point for any reader.<sup>23</sup> With this particular approach, meaning is in the eyes of the beholder and is translated according to the reader's specific knowledge and experience.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> In no way does this suggest an exclusively binary approach to the late song cycles. Instead, it offers two possibilities for methodology in better understanding the late style of this composer that does not allow for unnecessary prejudice that has been perpetuated in the literature for so long.

<sup>24</sup> See Graham Allen, *Intertextuality: The New Critical Idiom* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000); Julia Kristeva, "The Ruin of a Poetics," in *Russian Formalism: A Collection of Articles and Texts in Translation*, eds., Stephen Bann and John E. Bowlt (Scottish Academic Press: Edinburgh, 1973), 102-19; Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de Linguistique Générale*, eds. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. Roy Harris (London: G. Duckworth, 1983); M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981); Roland Barthes, "Death of the Author," in *Image Music Text*, trans., Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977); Gérard Genette, *Figures of Literary Discourse*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982); Michael Riffaterre, *Semiotics of Poetry*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1978).

An example from the late song cycles that may be used to illustrate the usefulness of these two methods is Schumann's *Lieder-Album für die Jugend*, Op. 79 composed in 1849.<sup>25</sup> Aspects of this cycle that will be explored are Schumann's interest in childhood and youth and his role as a storyteller (Chapter 3). A structuralist perspective would recognize that there was a greater cultural and artistic emphasis in the nineteenth century on childhood inspired in part by the German folktale collections of Jakob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859) Grimm.<sup>26</sup> As a structuralist, one would study Op. 79 with the knowledge and acceptance that nineteenth-century artists utilized the childhood perspective as a way to communicate.<sup>27</sup> The acceptance of this cultural emphasis (according to who reads the text) as a stable aspect of nineteenth-century history allows for a specific kind of interpretation of Op. 79. Meaning, in this way, would be time- and culture-specific.

From a post-structuralist perspective, there are aspects of Op. 79 that may be understood differently. This avenue of exploration would understand meaning as radically unstable. One aspect that will be examined in this context is the significance of

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<sup>25</sup> See Ulrich Mahlert, "Pädagogik und Politik: Zu Schumanns Lieder-Album für die Jugend op. 79," in *Robert Schumann: Philologische, Analytische, Sozial- und Rezeptionsgeschichtliche Aspekte* (1999): 154-162; Bernhard Janz, "'Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen blüh'n?': Zur Bedeutung der Mignon-Gestalt im Schaffen Robert Schumanns," in *Festschrift für Winfried Kirsch zum 65. Geburtstag* (Tutzing, Germany: Schneider, 1996): 254-266; Jon W. Finson, "Schumann's Mature Style and the Album of Songs for the Young," *The Journal of Musicology* 8 no. 2 (Spring 1990): 227-250.

<sup>26</sup> *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Children and Household Tales), which contained eighty-six folktales, was published in 1812. Volume two, which added seventy stories, was published in 1814. In 1816 and 1818, the Grimm brothers published *Deutsch Sagen*, which contained 585 German legends.

<sup>27</sup> What this perspective communicated would depend on who was reading the texts. For instance, a German reader's understanding may be different than that of an English or Italian reader. Also, a reader from 1848 would understand a story in a different way than a reader living in Germany after 1871. For more information regarding, especially the reception of the Grimm Brothers' collections, see James M. McGlathery, ed., *The Brothers Grimm and Folktale* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988). Especially interesting are the following articles: "What Did the Grimm Brothers Give to and Take from the Folk?" by Linda Dégh (66-90), "New Results of Research on *Grimms' Fairy Tales*" by Heinz Rölleke (101-111), and "The Importance of Fairy Tales in German Families before the Grimms" by August Nitschke (164-177).

the figure of Mignon, a character in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795), who appears in the final song of this cycle (Chapter 4). The meaning of Mignon's appearance is all but stable and one may explore several different avenues of communication. First, one may find other places in Schumann's music where he alludes to Mignon, which would include the *Album für die Jugend*, Op. 68 for piano, *Lieder und Gesänge aus Goethes Wilhelm Meister*, op. 98a, and *Requiem für Mignon*, Op. 98b. Second, one may explore Schumann's musical relationships to the works of Goethe in general, which, in the songs alone, would include "Der Fischer" (1828), Op. 25 (1840), Op. 51 (1849), Op. 78 (1849), other songs in Op. 79 (1849), Op. 96 (1850), and Op. 98a (1849). Another way that one may study the appearance of Mignon at the end of Op. 79 is to study possible political overtones that Schumann's placement of this famous character in the final song had that an 1849-German audience would have understood. The post-structuralist would argue for the unstable nature of meaning of Mignon's appearance in this cycle and would allow for all three avenues of exploration. Finally, the post-structuralist would celebrate the possibility and validity of three (or more) completely different interpretations.

Throughout the present study, both the structuralist and post-structuralist methodologies will be utilized. Song cycles composed from 1849 to 1852 will be considered in relation to internal (within the cycle itself) and external (musical, cultural, or biographical) works, events, and experiences. The careful and topical study of selections from these twenty-three late cycles will provide a final chapter critical to a full evaluation of Schumann's compositional output in the genre of the song cycle. At least three themes may be recognized throughout these late cycles:



1. Robert Schumann's Political Commentary through the Late Song Cycles (Chapter 2)
2. Schumann's "dauerhafte Musik": Storytelling as a Means to Remember, Comment and Predict (Chapter 3)
3. A Consideration of Schumann's Portrayal of the "Female Voice" (Chapter 4)

The criteria for each topic will be discussed. Its relevance and the nature of that relevance will be examined. And a list of *opera* will be provided that fit the criteria for each topic.

Chapter 2 will examine political issues found in the song cycles from 1849 to 1852. Key to this investigation is a careful study of the poets and their poetry. Many of the texts that Schumann chose are clear indications of the profound affect that the political upheavals that occurred throughout the entire nineteenth century had on the artists during that time. At the very least, the political events that led to the mid-nineteenth-century revolutions led to crucial changes in European life and the art produced at that time. Many of the song cycles that Schumann composed between 1849 and 1852 provide evidence of the composer's view on these events. In addition, one may find the composer's interpretations of the political ideas of specific poets such as Goethe (1749-1832), Schiller (1759-1805), Fallersleben (1798-1874), and Lenau (1802-1850). Some of the *opera* examined in this chapter will be obviously political. Other cycles will be less overt but will still explore the political ideals that Schumann appreciated, like those of community, unity, and a strong sense of his German past.

Chapter 3 explores Schumann as a storyteller in the song cycles composed from 1849 to 1852. In the nineteenth century, storytellers remembered past events in order

to comment on social and political issues of their own day.<sup>28</sup> On the one hand, the storyteller's goal was to preserve a memory of experience and make that experience more than just a passing event (*Erlebnis*). On the other hand, these storytellers relayed their own ideas about events in a way to predict the future through learned experience (*Erfahrung*). Musical storytellers often used a folksong-style in order to convey their ideas in a simple and direct fashion.

Robert Schumann valued the ideals of the storyteller,<sup>29</sup> thus, it is not surprising that he was musically attracted to texts that told stories and made non-texted pieces into story-like events (*Märchenbilder* for viola and piano, Op. 132, and *Märchenerzählungen* for clarinet, viola and piano, Op. 132 to name two examples). One also hears from Schumann the storyteller through several of his late song cycles. One cycle that will be examined in Chapter 2 is the *Lieder und Gesänge*, Op. 96 composed in 1850. This cycle of five songs sets poetry by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, August Graf von Platen (1796-1835), and Wilfried von der Neun (Pseudonym for Friedrich Wilhelm Traugott Schöppf (1826-1916)).<sup>30</sup>

All of the texts that Schumann chose in Op. 96 contain descriptions of nature. In the first song, "Nachtlied," an unnamed wanderer is assured that he will rest just like the quiet treetops and birds. In the second song, "Schneeglöckchen," a snowflake is

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<sup>28</sup> See John Daverio, "Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms (Oxford and New York: Oxford, 2002), 243-250; Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov" (1936), in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969); John Daverio, "Schumann's Ossianic Manner." *Nineteenth Century Music* 21 no. 3 (1998): 260-73.

<sup>29</sup> See especially Schumann's 1838 review of Schubert's piano works in which Schubert told "to youth what it loves the best: romantic stories, full of knights, maidens, and adventures" in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 8 (June 5, 1838): 177-78.

<sup>30</sup> Song 1 in C major sets a text by Goethe. The author set in Song 2 in A-flat is anonymous. Song 3 in A-flat sets a text by Platen, and song 4 (C minor) and Song 5 (A-flat) set texts by Neun.

personified as a child who wonders where he came from, where he is to go, and where his homeland is. The third and fourth songs, “Ihre Stimme” and “Gesungen!” reveal the composer’s voice and emphasize the importance of communication through the spoken and, especially, sung word. The fifth song, “Himmel und Erde,” brings back the images from the first. The musical climax of this concluding song empowers the forces of nature and shows how the protagonist grew in character as he progressed through the different stages of his life.

Op. 96 is the story of a wanderer’s physical and emotional journey that is progressively traced during the 5-song cycle. This cycle will be examined as a story with five musically related events even though the five poems may initially appear unrelated. This chapter explores the musical way in which Schumann allows his wanderer (in the first song) to find rest. The meaning of rest for this wanderer will also be examined as it is musically revealed in the final song.

Chapter 4 explores Schumann’s portrayal of the “Female Voice.” Schumann set poetry written by women seven times in the songs written during and after 1840. On some occasions he was unaware that the poetry he used was by a female poet. On other occasions, he deliberately sought out the female voice.<sup>31</sup>

Schumann’s most significant contributions to song cycles that feature the female voice are those that set texts by Elisabeth Kulmann (1808-1825). Kulmann was from

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<sup>31</sup> Many of the early songs that set poetry by female writers fall in the first category and, therefore would reveal very little about Schumann’s ability to portray the “female” voice. For instance, *Myrthen*, Op. 25 features work by English poet Catherine Maria Fanshawe (1765-1834) and Austrian poet Marianne von Willemer (1784-1860). In both cases, Schumann wrongly attributed the poems to Byron and Goethe.

One early song that falls in the second category is *Vier Gesänge*, Op. 142, which includes poetry by Lily Bernhard, a friend of Clara’s. Schumann set Bernhard’s “Kleine Tropfen, seid ihr Thränen?” in Op. 142 no. 3 which was written in 1840 and published later. John Daverio argues that Op. 142 was published posthumously in 1858 and Helmut Schanze claims that it was published in 1852. In any case, it appears that it was a cycle that was saved for financial considerations for future publication after the year Schumann wrote it.

St. Petersburg and, despite her very short life, produced a substantial body of work that included over a thousand poems. *Mädchenlieder*, Op. 103 and *Sieben Lieder*, Op. 104, both published in 1851, contain poems by Elisabeth Kulmann.<sup>32</sup> Of particular interest is Schumann's *Sieben Lieder*, Op. 104. In this cycle, unlike any other song cycle that Schumann composed, he provided a short, epigraphic inscription about the poet before each song. These paragraphs chronicle Kulmann's life from the beginning until her death at the young age of seventeen.<sup>33</sup> These tributes to Kulmann show how closely Schumann associated her life with her work in Op. 104.

Chapter 4 explores Schumann's interpretation of Kulmann's life through his didactic sketches preceding each song and his musical settings of her poetry. This chapter also considers important connections between Kulmann and her texts and Schumann and his music. Finally, this chapter explores how the lives of both the poet and composer as well as the fabrics of the text and music interweave themselves and combine to reveal Schumann's portrayal of this woman's voice. In addition to Op. 104, Chapter 4 examines Op. 135, *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart*, the last complete song cycle that Schumann composed.

Through a thorough understanding of this last cycle as well as the other song cycles that Robert Schumann composed after 1848, not only may we fully appreciate a

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<sup>32</sup> Karl Friedrich von Großheirich published Kulmann's poetry in 1835. Helmut Schanze argues that it is possible that some of the poems in this collection were heavily edited and possibly written by Großheirich himself. Whether or not this is the case, Schumann's goal in Op. 103 and Op. 104 was to portray the female voice. See Helmut Schanze, ed., *Robert Schumann New Edition of the Complete Works: Literary Text used in Solo Songs, Part Songs, and Works for Vocal Declamation Series VIII Supplements Volume 2* (Mainz: Schott, 2002), 262-264. Schumann chose poems in both sets that came from Kulmann's *Sämtliche Dichtungen* published in St. Petersburg in 1835 and edited by Karl Friedrich von Großheirich. After Schumann composed the songs, Großheirich sent a copy to the composer, which is now in the Robert-Schumann-Haus in Zwickau.

<sup>33</sup> John Daverio compares this cycle to *Frauenliebe und -leben*, arguing that the 1840 cycle was about a woman's life and Op. 104 was about a girl's life. See Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a Poetic Age*, p. 464.

large part of Schumann's late-compositional oeuvre, but also we may better understand the mid-century German culture from this artist's perspective. The method by which Schumann communicated with his audiences—one so different from that of the 1840-songs—is one that is as significant as the messages he hoped to communicate. By embracing at least three important personae, Schumann, whose experiences leading up to 1848 had changed him as a man and as a musician, communicated with a strong voice through his late songs at a time when his audiences were quite ready to listen.

## CHAPTER 2

### POLITICAL AND SOCIAL IDEAS IN THE LATE SONG CYCLES

The volatile political and changing social climate was part of Schumann's immediate experience (*Erlebnis*) and, over a very short amount of time, became part of his learned experience (*Erfahrung*). He conveyed his interpretations of his and his community's experiences through the musical works he composed after 1848. The political and social dimensions of these late song cycles were reflected partly in his use of texts by authors whose names carried prominent political associations in post-revolutionary society – poets such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), Nikolaus Lenau (1802-1850), August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798-1874), Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805), George Gordon Noel Lord Byron (1788-1824), and Maria Stuart (1542-1587). Except for Byron, Lenau, and Stuart, all of these poets were represented in the *Lieder-Album für die Jugend*, Op. 79, begun in 1849 during Schumann's tenure in Dresden and completed shortly afterward. This highly political song cycle is one that will be briefly examined in terms of the political nature of the poets' lives therein.<sup>1</sup> Other cycles that this study explores include *Gesänge aus Lord Byrons "Hebräischen Gesänge,"* Op. 95 and *Lieder und Gesänge aus Wilhelm Meister*, Op. 98a (Goethe) from 1849, *Vier Husarenlieder von N. Lenau*, Op. 117 from 1851, and *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart*, Op. 135 from 1852.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This political nature of this cycle was studied in an important article by Jon Finson in 1990. Some of his points will be reiterated in this section to set up the third section which will identify other late songs that convey Schumann's political and social ideas of change and show the composer's new late style of composing. See Jon Finson, "Schumann's Mature Style and the *Album of Songs for the Young*," *Journal of Musicology* 8 (1990): 227-50.

<sup>2</sup> This cycle is also featured in Chapter 4, which explores Schumann's empowerment of women in his late song cycles.

## European Social and Political Change from 1800-1850

The period between 1789 and 1848 was a tumultuous time for Europe, and social, economic, and political factors led to over fifty revolutions in 1848 alone. Nobody living during this time was left unaffected, and most of society had a vested interest in and strong desire for social, economic, and political change. Most importantly, many citizens wanted their voices heard and their ideas valued. Despite the sometimes-stringent censorship, artists of this period provided through their art a venue for the general ideas of discontent for the present conditions and then, hope for a future they desired to have a hand in creating. The art of this period, including the song cycles composed by Schumann, was marked with a strong theme of searching—there was a desperate search for a society that had different rules than those enforced by eighteenth-century governments, and, by the 1830s, there was an impassioned search for national identity.<sup>3</sup> While Schumann and other artists did not necessarily propose solutions to the social, economic, and political problems that existed, they did convey the general sentiment that surrounded and ignited this unstable time.

### Political, Socio-Economic, and Cultural Transition

The period between 1815 and 1848 was a transitional one for the German states politically, socio-economically, and culturally, and it began before 1815 with the impact

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<sup>3</sup> The literature of this period, especially, was marked by a strong theme of searching. Philosopher's names who may be included in this list were Kant, Herder, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Poets Schiller, Wieland, Klopstock and especially Johann Christian Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843) may also be included. For more on the work of Hölderlin see Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: 1789-1848*, especially chapter 14, "The Arts." Also see James N. Hardin and Christoph E. Schweitzer, *German Writers in the Age of Goethe, 1789-1832* (Detroit: Gale Research, 1989); Edwin Muir, *Essays on Literature and Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965); Paul De Man, *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984). The themes found in Hölderlin's works were similar to those found in the poets' works that Schumann set in the late songs.

of the French Revolution. Despite social tensions and population expansion, the German states were able to temporarily solve their problems through various reforms, especially in Prussia under Frederick II (fl. 1740-1786) and Austria under Joseph II (fl. 1765-1790). Many Germans considered themselves superior to their French counterparts, because they did not have to resort to violent revolution. The French Revolution did, however, plant a seed in the hearts of discontented Germans. And this was the seed of possibility—a real possibility that the people had the potential to initiate changes on their own without depending on the notoriously fickle established governmental and legislative processes.

While the events of the early and middle part of the nineteenth century eventually led to German unification in 1871, unification seemed impossible to many German-speaking citizens before 1848. The reason for this sentiment was that many of the German states were so large (especially Prussia and Austria) that the smaller states did not want to be consumed as parts of these larger entities and lose their own identities. Furthermore, states like Austria were so conservative and inactive that they saw no real need for a centralized government. States such as Bavaria and Baden, Württemberg, and Hesse-Darmstadt adopted their own constitutions in 1818, 1819, and 1820, respectively.

Although some states pursued unification more assertively than others, there were political rumblings that included the formation of various student groups after 1815 and the development of important political tendencies, including that of liberalism in the 1820s and 1830s. The first student groups formed in Jena were called *Burschenschaften* (literally “student fraternities”). On March 23, 1819, the murder of



poet August von Kotzebue (1761-1819) by Karl Sand, a member of one of these *Burschenschaften*, inspired Prince Klemens von Metternich (1773-1859) of Austria to issue his Karlsbad Decrees. These decrees began a censorship campaign that targeted the universities and led to Metternich's dismissal of several university teachers supposedly involved in subversive activities. In addition, Metternich terminated all *Burschenschaften* and suppressed many of the popular newspapers that had appeared after the end of the Napoleonic occupation.<sup>4</sup>

Paradoxically, however, the murder of Kotzebue and Metternich's crackdown also facilitated a resurgence of liberalist sentiment in the middle classes of the German lands over the course of the 1820s and 1830s. There were two different factions of liberalism at this time. The north German liberals advocated for the restoration of rights to the old estates. The south German liberals, on the other hand, were more radical. They desired new constitutions, emphasized individual liberty, and wanted desperately to restrict the power of their rulers. The July Revolution of 1830 in France further focused these movements, intensifying the sense of urgency for German unification or, at least, the idea of change in governmental policy. Moreover, the pride German-speakers had previously taken in their legislative rather than revolutionary means of accomplishing social change began to yield to the French model as more citizens felt that they might have to take violent action in order to achieve meaningful change. In

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<sup>4</sup> See Harald Lonnecker, "Unzufriedenheit mit den bestehenden Regierungen unter dem Volke zu verbreiten: Politische Lieder der Burschenschaften aus der Zeit zwischen 1820 und 1850." *Lied und populäre Kultur: Jahrbuch des Deutschen Volksliedarchivs Freiburg* 48 (2003), 85-131; Heinz-Joachim Simon, *Kotzebue: eine deutsche Geschichte* (München: Universitas, 1998); Frank W. Thackeray and John E. Findling, *Events that Changed the World in the Nineteenth Century* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1996); Arthur James May, *The Age of Metternich, 1814-1848* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963); Enno E. Kraehe, *Metternich's German Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

May 1832, thousands gathered at the Hambach Festival (“Hambacher Fest”) to celebrate music and politics. Although there was not a consensus on how and by what means to establish German unification (which began to be a more important issue to the people during this time), it was a turning point for Germans and their desire and need for political change. Not only had this gathering inspired the people, but it also inspired Metternich to revive the Karlsbad Decrees, forbid political meetings and associations of any kind, and, in 1834, to impose excessive censorship of the press.<sup>5</sup>

A second domain that underwent considerable transition during the first half of the nineteenth century was that of a socio-economic nature. While the population of the German states expanded considerably, the social organization changed rather quickly from a feudal system to a class society. Increasing industrialization and domestic prosperity in the 1830s improved the education, literacy, and travels of citizens throughout the German lands—improvements such as the building of hard-surfaced roads, canals, and, most importantly, railways.<sup>6</sup> Another improvement that established economic unification among all of the German states except Austria was the creation of the German Customs Union (*Deutscher Zollverein*) in 1834. This organization regulated goods traveling from state to state and also established the Prussian *Thaler* as the

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<sup>5</sup> For more on this period of transition, see Mary Fulbrook, “The Age of Industrialisation, 1815-1918,” in *A Concise History of Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 104-154. Also see Priscilla Robertson, “Germany,” in *Revolutions of 1848: A Social History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 105-186; Eric Hobsbawm, “Part I. Developments,” in *The Age of Revolution: 1789-1848* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 7-131; Veit Valentin, *Das Hambacher Nationalfest* (Berlin: Historisch-politischer Verlag, 1932), and Kurt Baumann, *Das Hambacher Fest, 27. Mai 1832; Männer und Ideen* (Speyer: Verlag der Pfälzischen Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaften, 1957).

<sup>6</sup> Gottfried Eberhard Voelker, *The Impact of Railroads on the German Economy in the Late Nineteenth Century*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Nebraska, 1970).

currency used throughout the German-speaking lands.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, these improvements were unable to keep pace with the demands posed by the rapid growth of the German-speaking population. Simply put, there was not enough food to feed the ever-growing number of people and that led to a general feeling of discontent among the poor. This crisis contributed to the wave of revolutions that broke out across Europe in 1848.

Many sectors of the German-speaking public desired full and representative enfranchisement in the large-scale dealings of state and country. They wanted to vote, to be granted free and public expression of opinions, and to share opinions and suggestions through printed publications. Second, citizens across Europe wished to trust leadership and trust in a system that was not corrupt. They wanted a system that cared about the interests of the individual, no matter to which class that individual belonged. In addition, people wanted to trust in businesses and trust in the fair buying and selling of goods. Men and women craved the opportunity to be educated and desired the ability to move ahead. They wanted their life on the earth to be one of fulfillment, joy, enrichment, and growth. Despite differences among the political agendas of the working classes, the middle classes, and the aristocracy, these themes of trust, representation, and increased freedom and prosperity predominated in public artistic discourse of the time. Poets and composers who reacted to the general sentiment of

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<sup>7</sup> See Toni Pierenkemper and Richard Tilly, *The German Economy During the Nineteenth Century* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2002). See W. Robert Lee, *German Industry and German Industrialisation: Essays in German Economic and Business History in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991). See Alice Teichova and Herbert Matis, *Nation, State and the Economy in History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) especially "Nation Building in Germany: The Economic Dimension" by Gerd Hardach.

discontent in their art responded to the changing social and political environment. Their responses transformed the way art was created and perceived by their public.

Finally, these political and socio-economic changes both facilitated and were prompted by profound developments in the worlds of education, philosophy, and the arts. Educational reforms produced highly literate people at the university level as well as in secondary and primary schools. The students who graduated from German universities found themselves at the top of their fields in several academic areas, such as chemistry, theology, law, and philology. The study of the philosophical ideas of Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) further ignited this important transitional time culturally and intellectually. Hegel argued that certain conflicts were necessary to resolve tensions between opposing ideas, such as freedom and authority—two ideas, at the time, that were at odds with each other. He believed that the French Revolution was a necessary step toward freedom and toward the establishment of constitutional governments in Europe. Hegel was influenced by the ideas of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), who advocated for constitutional republicanism, as well as Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814). In 1806, when Berlin was occupied by Napoleon, Fichte delivered his *Addresses to the German Nation* (*Reden an die deutsche Nation*). In these addresses, Fichte argued that a common language among a people established unity. This unity would be further strengthened if the people were willing to sacrifice self for the good of the whole.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See Frederick Neuhouer, *Foundations of Hegel's Social Theory: Actualizing Freedom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Terry Pinkard, *Hegel: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Elliot L. Jurist, *Beyond Hegel and Nietzsche: Philosophy, Culture, and Agency* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2000); David Simpson, *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Hegel, Book 10* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Henry David Aiken, *The Age of Ideology: The Nineteenth Century Philosophers*

Another important thinker during this period was Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) whose relationship with Goethe is discussed later in this chapter. Herder believed that the past was an important source that would help shape the future. He inspired German speakers to develop a pride about their common past—a commonness that began with language. He also believed that the poetry of a people would inspire unity and valued German folksongs most of all. In 1773 he published *Stimmen der Völker in ihren Liedern* (Voices of the People in their Songs), which supported his belief that a poet is the creator of the nation around him.<sup>9</sup>

Partly in response to these philosophies, German speakers saw themselves as part of a larger plan and part of a progression through history for the first time. They understood and began to accept that this progression involved conflicts and struggles that brought those who survived to a developmental stage that was elevated and more advanced than the previous stage. This idea was an important shift in intellectual thought, because in order to advance, Germans had to endure struggle and conflict. Many philosophers, including Karl Marx (1818-83), believed that revolutionary conflicts were a natural course of events that had to occur in order to reach a higher level of development.<sup>10</sup>

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(Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957); Godfrey Norman Agmondisham Vesey, *Idealism, Past and Present* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

<sup>9</sup> See Hugh Barr Nisbet, *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Schiller, Goethe*, Book 7; Josef Chytrý, *The Aesthetic State: A Quest in Modern German Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989; Emery Edward Neff, *The Poetry of History: The Contribution of Literature and Literary Scholarship to the Writing of History since Voltaire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947).

<sup>10</sup> Of course, Marx's ideas were in the beginning stages from 1815-1848 and did not influence German thinkers significantly, but it is important to realize how thinkers at this time were beginning to use the ideas of philosophers like Hegel to benefit their own revolutionary tendencies. See Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962); Karl Marx, Joseph J. O'Malley (ed.), *Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

Other significant cultural changes occurred in the areas of music and literature. The generation of composers and poets born during the first and second decades of the nineteenth century had to accept, and, in a sense, respond to the work of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). Both of these artists inspired significant change and controversy in their own fields by the newness of their ideas and originality of their art. Music and literature were so closely tied to each other at this time that composers, such as Robert Schumann, had to know and respond to both of these figures. Not only were artists being forced to find their way in an increasingly politically volatile atmosphere, but they were also searching for their own individual identities as artists in their own rights.<sup>11</sup>

Another figure's work and life that brought about a significant artistic response during this time was that of Byron (1788-1824). He was exiled from his own country in 1816, worshipped Napoleon, was actively involved in the Italian Risorgimento, and died during his involvement in the Greek war of Independence. He was a nonconformist whose fights for personal and political freedoms made him an international figure before and, especially, after his death. While Byron was alive, his reception was varied and morally compromised in England, as is well known and documented. In death, however, he became the Romantic hero. His image was reinvented after his death in ways to inspire literature, art, and music. Thomas Moore's 1830 biography glossed over the controversial aspects of Byron's life and emphasized the acceptable,

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<sup>11</sup> For more on the subject of composers and poets having to confront past art and finding their own ways to become artistic individuals by responding to and sometimes rejecting their immediate past, see Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973, 1997); Mark Evan Bonds, *After Beethoven: The Imperative of Originality in the Symphony* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

mythologizing Byron as a noble hero.<sup>12</sup> This mythologized construction of Byron's identity had been anticipated already in 1824, in Joseph-Denis von Odevaere's *The Death of Byron* (Figure 2.1), which presented a martyr-like figure and suggested a body that was sacrificed—sacrificed for the noble cause of revolution. Odevaere's depiction showed a perfect, young man's body whose head was dressed with laurel leaves. The theme of one dying young for a noble cause resonates.

Figure 2.1. Joseph-Denis von Odevaere's *The Death of Byron*



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<sup>12</sup> George Gordon Byron, Baron; Thomas Moore, *The Life, Letters, and Journals of Lord Byron*, (St. Clair Shores, Michigan: Scholarly Press, 1920 – New and Complete Edition); Thomas Moore, *The Works of Lord Byron: with his Letters and Journals, and his Life* (London: J. Murray, 1832-33); Fiona MacCarthy, *Byron: Life and Legend* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002).

In 1840, Josef Danhauser's *Liszt am Flügel* (Liszt at the Piano) (Figure 2.2) shows several artists paying homage to Beethoven whose bust sits on top of the piano. Hanging on the wall of the background of this scene is a portrait of Byron. Along with Liszt and his mistress Marie d'Agoult, the painting shows Alexandre Dumas, George Sand, and musicians Paganni, Rossini, and Berlioz. Schumann, who was not part of this particular painting, too, felt the presence of Byron and was inspired by his posthumous reputation in works that will be examined later in this chapter.

Figure 2.2. Joseph Danhauser's *Liszt am Flügel*





Having experienced the political, socio-economic, and cultural transitions of nineteenth-century Germany first-hand, Schumann responded by adopting various artistic personae in his late works—especially the late song cycles. His presentations, musical settings, and dialogues with the poets who also responded to these transitions make the late song cycles a significant part of the general nineteenth-century artistic response to these changing times. Schumann’s audience had changed drastically from the audience for whom he had composed before 1848, and the times had transformed significantly. Schumann responded with a “completely new manner of composing”<sup>13</sup> that may be recognized by songs composed beginning in 1849.

### Schumann’s Poets

Schumann’s avid interest in the political events during the mid-nineteenth century is evident from the lives and works of the poets whom he chose to set in his post-1848 songs. After 1848 many of the texts that Schumann chose for his song cycles contained obvious political content. The political meaning of these texts, in some cases, would have been clear to virtually any reader. Other times, the political meaning had to be inferred by the audience. Jon Finson maintains that in some cases, the choice of poet was a political statement in and of itself.<sup>14</sup> One case in which the political basis was not altogether clear was Schumann’s decision to set texts by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Texts that Schumann chose that resounded with political content were ones by Friedrich von Schiller, Nikolaus Lenau, and August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, although the latter may not be recognized by the modern reader. Schumann also set texts

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<sup>13</sup> *Tagebücher* 2, p. 402.

<sup>14</sup> See Finson, “Schumann’s Mature Style.”

translated from English by Byron and, perhaps, surprisingly, Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-87). Both works may be considered in a political context.

### Learning to Read: Schumann and Jean Paul

One of Schumann's favorite authors and a source from which he gained considerable inspiration both in his piano writing and in the way he communicated to his own audiences through his writing was Jean Paul Richter (1763-1825).<sup>15</sup> Schumann's reading of Jean Paul (as he is customarily designated) served as a catalyst for his reaction to other art. Jean Paul, in a sense, taught Schumann how to read, and provided Schumann several ways to communicate in his own musical and literary works throughout his entire life. First, Jean Paul was interested in the every day. Although scholarship sometimes argues that his texts were not memorable or artful, Jean Paul's ideas encouraged the reader to apply messages from his works to the reader's own life.<sup>16</sup> Jean Paul inspired the reader to infer information and meaning that was not obvious in his written words and therefore encouraged active participation in the process. This participation stimulated a dialogue. The initial dialogue was between the author and the characters. Then, finally, the dialogue included the readers, who were to apply lessons learned from the text to their own lives.

In his musical compositions, Schumann inspired a similar relationship between the musical text and the audience. This relationship was especially evident in

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<sup>15</sup> See Erika Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles and the Novels of Jean Paul* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004); John Daverio, "Revelling in Schubert and Jean Paul" in *Robert Schumann*, 33-54; Leon Botstein, "History, Rhetoric, and the Self," In *Schumann and his World*, ed. R. Larry Todd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 7-23.

<sup>16</sup> Botstein, "History, Rhetoric, and the Self," 7-19.

Schumann's new conceptual approach to song composition after 1848. Schumann, like Jean Paul, encouraged his audiences to engage in his music and to listen actively instead of passively. The composer inspired them to participate emotionally as well as intellectually. The artwork, in this new approach, initiated a dialogue between the composer (himself) and the music. Second, he encouraged a dialogue between the audience and his art. The inclusion of texts from yet another source (the poet's words) added another layer to the dialogue. The goal in the end involved the audience's ability to apply the meaning of each dialogue to their own lives. If this goal was accomplished, the meaning and ideas found in that piece of art never died—and therefore, the piece of art itself became immortal.

Schumann learned to develop this kind of dialogue and to make his art accessible through his lifelong study of Jean Paul's novels.<sup>17</sup> This kind of dialogue further inspired the idea that one's own life was an ongoing novel or a piece of art—a personal *Bildungsroman*—viewing one's own life as a story of growth and education. The concept that a human life was a piece of art that may be developed over the years was one that literary authors explored in the nineteenth century and continued into the early twentieth century. Not only was the human life a piece of art, but the relationship between man and art was one that was significant. In this line of thought, one may apply lessons learned through great art as one journeys through life. This journey became a process and one that the self controlled and manipulated through experience and growth.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> For more on Schumann and Jean Paul see Botstein, "History, Rhetoric, and the Self," and Daverio, *Robert Schumann* especially pp. 20-54.

<sup>18</sup> Schumann explicitly invoked this careful juxtaposition of art and life in his Kulmann settings, Op. 104. See Chapter 4, below.

Another important interest nurtured during Schumann's study of the works of Jean Paul was a special attention to the past. This interest in the past—one of a collective memory—was inspired by Schumann's father as well. In a selection about human suffering and the difference between the suffering of humans and animals, Jean Paul showed the difference between how the animal and the human feels. While the animal's wounds are more momentary, the human being anticipates the feeling and, more importantly, remembers the feeling. Jean Paul argued that,

sein Schmerz wird nicht durch das Erwarten, das Erinnern und das Bewußtsein desselben dreifach verlängert und geschärft . . . Und daher bekam nur unser Auge Tränen.

([the animal's pain] is not enlarged threefold and made more intense by *expectation, memory, and consciousness* [like the human's is]. And therefore tears appear in our eyes alone.)<sup>19</sup>

Schumann understood and applied Jean Paul's idea to his musical works—especially those composed after 1848. The composer realized that the collective memory of a large group of people who lived in the same territory and spoke the same language was a commonality that would further unite the people in that group. Acknowledging and recounting a common past created a bond among the people.

Dresden, 1849: Schumann and the  
*Lieder-Album für die Jugend*, Op. 79

Die politische Freiheit ist vielleicht die eigentliche Amme der Poesie: sie ist zur Entfaltung der dichterischen Blüthen am meisten nothwendig: in einem Lande, wo Leibeigenschaft, Knechtschaft etc. ist, kann die eigentliche Poesie nie gedeihen: ich meine die Poesie, die in das öffentliche Leben entflammend u. begeisternd tritt.

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<sup>19</sup> Emphasis is my own. This quotation was found in Jean Paul's "Das Kampaner Tal," in the section, "Suffering without Consolation." Gerhard Stenzel, ed. *Die deutschen Romantiker* (Salzburg, n.d.), vol 2, p. 394, fn 8. Trans. Botstein, "History, Rhetoric, and the Self," p. 8.

(Political freedom is perhaps the actual wet nurse of poetry; it is necessary above all for the unfolding of poetic blossoms; genuine poetry (that is, poetry, which enters into public life enthusiastically and passionately) can never thrive in a land where serfdom and slavery prevail).<sup>20</sup>

Before the onset of the serious reconsideration of Schumann's late works, there had always been doubt as to the effect (if any) the mid-century revolutions had on him as an individual and an artist. Because of the way he reacted when the fighting came to his doorstep in 1849 and, for some scholars, because of the style of music he composed during and after these years of uncertainty, fear, and, at the same time, hope and optimism, few scholars acknowledged the ways in which the tumultuous social issues of his day informed his music—or, at the very least, that he used his art as a means to escape the violence and political turmoil that dominated Europe for more than a year.<sup>21</sup>

Certainly there was a seeming incongruity between the man who detested violence of any kind, and the intellect that, in 1848 and 1849, read every newspaper he could find and who passionately debated and discussed politics with Clara night after night. Both of the Schumanns were against a constitutional monarchy and in favor of a republic run by moderates. They were not ready, however, to actively participate when, in May 1849, fighting erupted near their home in Dresden where they lived. For one

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<sup>20</sup> Robert Schumann, *Tagebücher* 1, p. 77. Trans. Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, p. 421.

<sup>21</sup> For instance, Eric Sams argued, "Schumann never again reached or even approached the level of his 1840 masterpieces. The songs of 1849 are a decline; the later ones a descent, first steep and then precipitous... There is another sense in which the borders between the real and the unreal are becoming just a little blurred in Schumann's mind. In the previous year, 1848, a year of revolution throughout Europe, he had been writing works of great radical fervour; . . . there is some incongruity in his writing a song-book for children while his political ideals were being bloodily suppressed." See Eric Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann* (New York: 1969), pp. 278, 197-198.

In the last decade or so, scholars John Daverio, Jon W. Finson, Ulrich Mahler, and Reinhard Kapp have begun a rethinking of this theory, which was further inspired by the writing of Sams, and have begun important work towards a rethinking of the late works as they relate to Schumann's reaction and response to the mid-century revolutions.

thing, the Schumanns were vehemently opposed to violence. For another, Clara was seven months pregnant and already cared for their four other children Marie, Elise, Julie, and Ludwig.

A few days after the fighting began in Dresden, the Schumanns left their home and their three youngest children behind with their maid, Henriette. Even though Schumann believed he would return that evening, the circumstances do not paint a noble picture of either Robert Schumann or his wife. After considerable fighting in a very short time period, the royalists regained control, and on May 10 the Schumann family returned to a city that was all but completely destroyed. Almost immediately, they departed again and stayed in the nearby resort town Bad Kreischa for about a month. This month was a very productive one for Schumann.<sup>22</sup> As Clara commented, much of the music he composed was seemingly opposite in nature to that which he had just experienced in Dresden.<sup>23</sup>

While all of the music Schumann composed at this time was not obviously emotionally driven and full of the angst that he certainly felt as a result of the events of the past month, these events were not far from his mind. In fact, he had composed several obviously patriotic and political pieces directly before, during, and after his time in Bad Kreischa.<sup>24</sup> The tranquility that Clara heard in the *Lieder-Album für die Jugend*

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<sup>22</sup> The pieces he began or completed include the *Lieder-Album für die Jugend*, *Kennst du das Land*, *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt* (both Mignon Lieder), many songs for women's voices and piano, the piano parts for Opp. 69 and 91 (*Romanzen* for women's chorus), *Fünf Gesänge* for men's chorus (Op. 137), *Verzweifle nicht im Schmerzenstal* (for double men's chorus), and *Minnespiel* Op. 101.

<sup>23</sup> See Berthold Litzmann, *Clara Schumann: Ein Künstlerleben 2* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1905), 191.

<sup>24</sup> Including the motet *Verzweifle nicht im Schmerzenstal* for double men's chorus and organ ad libitum, *Drei Geänge*, Op. 62 which Schumann called "patriotic songs" in the *Haushaltbücher*, *Drei Freiheitsgesänge*, WoO 13-15, *Fünf Gesänge* from Laube's *Jagdbrevier*, Op. 137, and *IV Märsche*, Op. 76.

was one that may have masked a completely different agenda—one that was political in nature.<sup>25</sup>

Central to the political nature of this song cycle was Schumann's choice of poets, the inclusion of a mini-cycle heard harmonically in the first six songs, and the folk-like style that dominates the cycle as a whole. One of the most compelling pieces of evidence to the first and second of these points is the use of poetry in the first six songs by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, who wrote the lyrics that had been adopted for the German national anthem in 1843. It was no accident that Schumann chose his work for this cycle and made it so prominent—but not prominent enough so that the censors, who would have been all the more wary of artistic works after 1848, would deem it unacceptable.

Because of the censors, Schumann could not, of course, compose music that was overtly political after 1848. The authorities critically scrutinized the work of artists all over Europe. In order to reach the publication stage, these works were put through rigorous tests. In order to be convincing with Op. 79, Schumann made this song cycle one that went from very simple to quite difficult ending with the most complicated song, "Kennst du das Land," one of Mignon's songs from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. On December 19, 1849 Schumann wrote to Emanuel Klitsch, who reviewed the work, that he chose the very best poets for Op. 79 and that Mignon's song was the goal of the cycle.<sup>26</sup> The song is one that reiterates the general sentiment felt by

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<sup>25</sup> See Jon Finson, "Schumann's Mature Style and the 'Album of Songs for the Young,'" *The Journal of Musicology* 8 no. 2 (Spring 1990): 227-250.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Schumann, *Robert Schumanns Briefe. Neue Folge*, ed. F. Gustav Jansen, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Leipzig, 1904), 324. See Jon Finson, "Schumann's Mature Style and the Album of Songs for the Young," p. 232.

everyone, that will be discussed later in this chapter regarding other song cycles – that of a search for a better life. In his review, Klitsch spoke to the power of “Kennst du das Land”:

Der Drang, der sich durch dasselbe hindurchzieht, ist noch dunkel und unbestimmt, das höher pulsirende Seelenleben der Mignon beginnt zu erwachen und greift nach einem Ausdrucke, ohne denselben jedoch zu finden, weil die Gefühle noch im Zustande der Aufdämmerung sich befinden. Und dieß hat Schumann in seiner Mignon treffend musikalisch dargestellt, jenes Drängen nach der nebelvollen Ferne, hinter welcher sie Befriedigung ihres Dranges zu finden glaubt, jenes schmerzlich, wonnevolle Sehnen nach einer Aussprache dieses Dranges.

(The desire that pervades [the poem] is still dark and undefined, the higher life of Mignon’s soul begins to awake and reach for the means of expression, nevertheless without finding it, because her emotions are still in the state of dawning. And Schumann has represented this fittingly in music, that craving for a mist-enshrouded distant place, where [Mignon] believes she will satisfy her desire, that painful, rapturous longing for the means to express the craving.)<sup>27</sup>

“Kennst du das Land” not only ends the *Lieder-Album für die Jugend*, but also begins *Lieder und Gesänge aus Wilhelm Meister*, Op. 98a. This “recycling” suggests that Schumann afforded special importance to the words of the text, the character of Mignon, and to Goethe as poet. From 1848, Goethe was an author who, for many German speakers, represented a common literary past. Although Schumann referred more to Jean Paul in his early diaries, he certainly knew and respected the name Goethe from an early age. Goethe represented German literature for many Germans. This fact made it important for Schumann to create an artistic dialogue with Goethe’s

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<sup>27</sup> Emanuel Klitsch, “Lieder und Gesänge. Robert Schumann, Op. 79. Lieder-album für die Jugend. Leipzig, Breitkopf und Härtel. Preis 3 Thlr.” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 32 (1850): 57-59. Trans. Finson, “Schumann’s Mature Style,” 233.



works, because Goethe's texts were ones that every German knew or at least knew about.<sup>28</sup>

In 1828 Wolfgang Menzel (1798-1873) wrote *Die deutsche Literatur*, which contrasted Goethe's old-school way of writing and thinking to Jean Paul's new and freer style.<sup>29</sup> Menzel made the comparison into a political statement. He emphasized the freedom with which Jean Paul conveyed his ideas and the freedom that was absent from Goethe's works. It is unclear how much Menzel's ideas influenced Schumann, but Schumann most likely knew the source. At the very least, the composer was reminded by Menzel's claims that literature had the ability to create community. A people who all remembered the same aspects about their own past were people who had a past in common. Perhaps Schumann believed in the ideals that Menzel argued regarding the opposite political tendencies of Jean Paul and Goethe, but he never fully applied Menzel's theories to the works of Goethe.<sup>30</sup>

The other issue at hand was that Goethe's community encompassed much more than just the German-speaking states. After all, his works and ideas were more

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<sup>28</sup> The reception history of Goethe is one that changed throughout the nineteenth century. His reputation as "Literary Icon" was not fully appreciated until the 1870s. During the mid-nineteenth century, there were as many people who were ambivalent about Goethe's works as were proud to admit he was one who possibly represented German literature. By choosing to set Goethe's texts, Schumann was taking a side and was making a literary as well as a political statement. For more on the reception history of Goethe, see Gerhart Hoffmeister, "Reception in Germany and abroad," in *The Cambridge Companion to Goethe*, ed. Lesley Sharpe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 232-255; Karl Robert Mandelkow, "Wandlungen des *Faust*-Bildes in Deutschland," in *Interpreting Goethe's "Faust" Today*, ed. Jane K. Brown, Meredith Lee, and Thomas P. Saine (Columbia, South Carolina: Camden House, 1994), 239-51; and, John Michael Cooper, *Mendelssohn, Goethe, and the Walpurgis Night* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2007), esp. 163-80..

<sup>29</sup> Wolfgang Menzel, *Die deutsche Literatur* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1828, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1836).

<sup>30</sup> The year of Menzel's *Die deutsche Literatur* was the very year that Schumann composed the song *Der Fischer* which set a text by Goethe. If Schumann had believed in Menzel's ideas, he might not have featured the words of the "old school" Goethe in one of his first songs. Menzel's ideas went out of fashion rather quickly and many (including Heine) found fault in Menzel's reasoning on several occasions. Menzel probably most influenced Schumann's writing as a music critic. See Botstein, "History, Rhetoric, and the Self," for more on Menzel and his relationship with the artists of his day.

accepted at times in non-German cultures such as France and Great Britain. Instead of advocating for the idea of a national literature, Goethe, believed in the idea of a *Weltliteratur* (world-literature). This idea was one that included a much larger community and one that caused considerable anger among ardent German nationalists during the mid-nineteenth century. Schumann, as Op. 98a will show, seemed to adopt Goethe's global thinking in terms of literature's ability to create a large community—one even larger than the community of German-speakers. Schumann made a political choice by setting Goethe's texts in 1849 and one that showed his common bond with Goethe's writing and life.<sup>31</sup>

In its political uncertainty and its prominent impulses for substantial social and political change, Schumann's world in 1848 and 1849 in many ways resembled Goethe's world between 1789 and 1830. Schumann knew Goethe's life spanned a highly volatile and transitional time in European and German history, mostly influenced by the French revolution. Goethe responded to the general sentiment felt during each decade after the French Revolution. His response was not always overtly political, but his works often contained political messages and commentary. The reader who has participated actively with the text may find important meaning in Goethe's words that were significant to Goethe and also that could be applied to his or her own age. Even if Goethe was unable to be a political voice in his every-day life, his literary works showed his concern for Germany.

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<sup>31</sup> See Hans J. Weitz, "'Weltliteratur' zuerst bei Wieland," *Arcadia: Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* 22 (1987): 206-208; Fritz Stich, *Goethe and World Literature*, trans. C. A. M. Sym (London: Routledge, 1949); Nicholas Saul, "Goethe the Writer and Literary History," in *The Cambridge Companion to Goethe*, ed. Lesley Sharpe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 23-41 at 37-40; John Michael Cooper, "Tolerance, Translation, and Acceptance: Goethe's and Mendelssohn's Voices in European Cultural Discourse to ca. 1850," *Mendelssohn, Goethe, and The Walpurgis Night*.

Goethe's background may be summarized as follows. He spent his early years in Frankfurt on the Main, a city controlled by the upper middle class and not the aristocracy. His family was a member of one of the long-established lines who exercised control in this particular city and felt much the same about the lower classes, as did the aristocracy at the time. Therefore Goethe was born into a situation of privilege and appreciated a life full of benefits because of his station and class. He learned to value the benefits this life brought and certainly did not question it. He also learned a serious distrust of members of the lower classes from his upbringing. Goethe grew up on the side of power and had no reason from his early years to desire any kind of change in the social, economic, or political organization of his world.<sup>32</sup>

Later, Goethe made his living at the court of Duke Carl August of Weimar. He moved to Weimar to work for the Duke in 1775 and by 1782 became a member of the hereditary aristocracy as a result of a promotion within the Duke's court. Goethe remained loyal to Carl August throughout his life and, in return, the Duke gave Goethe appointments (for which he may or may not have been qualified at first) and freedom to write and travel. During his service to the Duke, Goethe was not a social reformer. His duties included consistent dealings with discontented peasants. If Goethe desired to voice an opinion in favor of the peasants, he did not do so due to his allegiance to the Duke. Goethe was opposed to war, was loyal to the Duke, and his standard of living was excellent in the existing present political, social and economic situation. His

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<sup>32</sup> See W. Daniel Wilson, "Goethe and the Political World" in *The Cambridge Companion to Goethe* ed. Lesley Sharpe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 207-218; Wilhelm Mommsen, *Die politischen Anschauungen Goethes* (Stuttgart, 1948); Claude David, "Goethe und die Französische Revolution," in *Deutsche Literatur und Französische Revolution* (Göttingen, 1974), pp. 63-86.

experiences did not lead him to make his voice heard in an anti-establishment context if, indeed, he felt that change was necessary.<sup>33</sup>

Goethe's literary works, however, may reveal a different side than did his public life. At first glance, one may consider Goethe's early works, such as *Götz von Berlichingen* (written in 1771 and published in 1773) and *Egmont* (begun in 1775 and not finished until 1782), as ones that glorify the nobility. A closer look, however, reveals that Goethe's thoughts about his place in life were not altogether uncomplicated. In *Götz*, Goethe presents two contrasting dramatic narratives that each features a main character. Set in the sixteenth century, the first storyline is based on the life of Gottfried von Berlichingen, an imperial knight who answered to the Emperor only. Goethe based his characterization of Götz on Gottfried's memoirs and presented this character as a kind and fair ruler. The second storyline featured the boyhood friend of Götz and also an imperial knight, Adelbert von Weislingen. These two men's paths are chronicled throughout the drama as a whole.

On the one hand, Götz's path involved active participation late in life in a revolt led by peasants, which, in turn, led to Götz's loss of personal honor and freedom. Adelbert, on the other hand, early in life, betrayed Götz so that he would acquire more power for himself. Adelbert gave up his personal freedom in order to gain professional prestige, while Götz had his freedom taken away because he was true to his personal ideals.

In this pair of contrasting narratives, Goethe presented two possible paths followed by men born into privilege. In the end, the one who did not fight against the

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<sup>33</sup> See Wilson, "Goethe and the Political World."

established authority made a better life for himself.<sup>34</sup> One might conjecture that Goethe felt that these two men's lives represented his own dilemma in dealing with the complicated aspects of his own time—a time when he desired a comfortable life for himself but, at the same time, saw the injustices of the overall political situation in general.

It is not only the presentation of two narratives that is significant in this work. The fundamental importance was that Goethe based the work on real characters from German history. Goethe's reference to the historical German past gave his present German readers a sense of pride in their past history, which ideally brought them closer together in a celebration of German things past and present. Martin Luther even made a brief appearance in this work. Although Goethe's views encompassed a larger world-community later, he still cared deeply for that which was German and a history that he and his German countrymen had in common.

In the song cycles composed in 1849 and 1850 Schumann drew from some of Goethe's most famous works, especially *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*.<sup>35</sup> In the mid-nineteenth century, such a choice brought with it an enormous responsibility as, by this time, Goethe had acquired a reputation in the literary world that could not be ignored, whether one held respect or contempt for Goethe's ideas.

Schumann's choice of Goethe's words as a political statement is a topic as yet unexplored in the secondary literature. Goethe's own identity seems at least more aligned with the ruling aristocracy than with the agents of social change—a paradox

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<sup>34</sup> See Nicholas Boyle, *Goethe The Poet and the Age* Volume I (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) especially "Life and Literature: Works, 1770-1771," pp. 107-124.

<sup>35</sup> Op. 98a (1849), Op. 51 (1849), Op. 79 (1849), Op. 78 (1849), and Op. 96 (1850).

when one considers Goethe as a political choice for Schumann, and an idea that may be difficult to document. Also, Goethe's advocating of a *Weltliteratur* instead of a *Nationalliteratur* makes the political nature of Schumann's decision to set Goethe complicated.

Schumann, in addition to his musical and literary interests, was a historian. In this context, he was interested in the longevity of art—especially German art. This interest was one that he had perhaps learned from his father years and years before. The ability of Schumann and his audiences to remember past art together was significant to Schumann the historian.<sup>36</sup>

Schumann knew that Goethe, by the age of 25 (1774), was well known and greatly respected throughout Europe. Goethe had the ability and the literary talent to interpret the highly transitional time that the German states endured at the turn of the nineteenth century. He was a nineteenth-century polymath whose breadth of interests granted him perspective on many different aspects of this transitional time. For many, and perhaps for Schumann, Goethe represented all that was German at a time when German-speakers were determined to find ways to establish a strong and united community. Further, Goethe's view of a world-wide community caused his works to reach a new political level for thinkers like Schumann who viewed such ideas not as a rejection of nationalist tendencies for Germans, but as a way to strengthen the potential for realizing nationalist dreams of an autonomous German state (a dream whose realization would be delayed for another generation).

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<sup>36</sup> For more on Schumann as a historian, see Leon Botstein, "History, Rhetoric, and the Self: Robert Schumann and Music Making in German-Speaking Europe, 1800-1860" in *Schumann and his World* ed. R. Larry Todd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3-46. See especially the introduction to this article, "Rescuing the Historical Schumann," 3-22.

In *Faust*, Goethe's talent and mastery of the German language allowed the literate German-speaking people the ability to relate, identify, and appreciate the global ideas that his works inspired. Common language and experience were two factors that unified the German states before 1871, when unification became official. For many, Goethe represented both, and these two aspects were manifested in his works. Because his name was known and respected all over Europe, there was a certain pride for many in the knowledge that Goethe was "German."<sup>37</sup>

This age was one that many German-speakers better understood by reading the literary works of Goethe. His works unified the experience of the immediate past for Schumann's generation more so than any historical account of this past could have. The common knowledge of his legacy and his works among the German-speaking people was what made Goethe political for Schumann in 1849. Many mid-century German speakers claimed Goethe as their own and appreciated his ability to interpret a time period that was as unstable as their own and a time that continued to inspire the economic, social, and political changes through which they were living at the mid-century mark. Not only was Goethe's name and work associated with the history of German literature, but also they were closely tied to the history of the *Lied*. Goethe learned the techniques of *Lieder* composition from his mentor, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), whom he met in 1770. Herder was a master of the German language and recognized language's important influences on the general thought process and its significant changes and developments during past historical and cultural periods.

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<sup>37</sup> Boyle, *Goethe: The Poet and the Age*, i-xiii.

Herder also realized how important language was as a communication tool on a deep level. From Herder Goethe learned that written language needed to be accessible.<sup>38</sup>

Part of this accessibility was realized in the written version of authentic and imitated folksongs. This tradition reached its climax between 1806 and 1808 when Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim compiled and published *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, which was a collection of folksongs that chronicled the literary history of the German folk. Goethe praised this collection. Under Herder in the 1770s he had compiled his own collection of folk songs throughout the countryside of Alsace. During this time, Goethe also composed poetry that captured the folk-like accessibility that Herder taught. Herder was especially enthusiastic about Goethe's early poem, "Heidenröslein" (Rose upon the Heath) which he praised for its simplicity and folk-like spirit.<sup>39</sup>

Herder published "Heidenröslein" for Goethe in 1773 and Goethe revised it between 1788-9. Herder included the poem in *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* (*Of German Character and Art*). This collection also included Herder's essay on the folksong, which introduced the word *Volkslied*. In this volume, Herder praised Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* and compared Goethe's place in German literary history to that of Shakespeare's place in English literary history. Furthermore, Herder argued that there was, at the time, a general shift in the goals and aspirations of German writers in

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<sup>38</sup> See Isaiah Berlin, "Herder and the Enlightenment," in *Aspects of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Earl R. Wasserman (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1965); Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1968).

<sup>39</sup> See Harry Seelig, "The Literary Context: Goethe as Source and Catalyst," in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (New York: Schirmer, 1996), 1-30.



general, which included the importance of the folksong. Later, scholarship labeled this shift under the umbrella, *Storm and Stress*.<sup>40</sup>

The singing of folksongs and the gathering and singing of poetry in general was a favorite social pastime for the upper and middle classes during the eighteenth century. Goethe was aware that the participation in such social settings was an important building of community. Interested in disseminating poetry that was of high quality, Goethe arranged newly written poems to well known folk-like melodies. In 1769 he published some of these combinations in the *Leipziger Liederbuch*.<sup>41</sup>

These early publications and the emphasis that Goethe placed on folksongs and Lieder that were accessible and that served as a community-building device would not have been lost on Schumann in 1849, when he chose Goethe's texts. In this way, choosing to set Goethe was a "political" move by Schumann. Goethe was an important part of the earliest stages whereby writers realized and advocated poetry, literature, and music as a means to unite a people—a people who only had their language and land in common. Bonds became stronger among the people of Goethe's generation when they were encouraged to celebrate a common literary history. In 1849, Schumann tried to duplicate or at least emulate these bonds and this feeling of unity among his own audiences.

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<sup>40</sup> See Boyle, *Goethe: The Poet and the Age*, pp. 113-114, 145. While the "Storm and Stress" (*Sturm und Drang*) is most characterized by the powerful display of emotion in works, Herder's *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* included an equal amount of attention to the importance of the folksong. See Roy Pascal, *The German Sturm und Drang* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953); Barry S. Brook, "Sturm und Drang and the Romantic Period in Music," *Studies in Romanticism* 9 (1970): 269-84.

<sup>41</sup> See Seelig, "Goethe as Source," 2-6.

### *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* and Op. 98a

When Schumann chose to set nine songs from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, he joined the growing number of composers who had already written music to these texts. Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814) composed music for eight songs that Goethe included in the original text sung by Mignon, the Harper, and Philine. After the novel was published, Friedrich Zelter, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Franz Schubert set individual poems in multiple versions.<sup>42</sup>

Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* was published between 1795 and 1796. This novel was one that marked a departure for Goethe in the way he conceived the idea of plot and character presentation. The novel's plot revolves around the title character, Wilhelm Meister. The importance of the plot, however, does not center exclusively on Wilhelm's life and growth into manhood. Instead, Goethe used Wilhelm as a sort of centerpiece around which he built several important story lines that became equally as important as the development of Wilhelm's character.

The construction of Goethe's ideas anticipates his later conception of *Weltliteratur*. Rather than focusing on one (character or nation) he broadens his view to celebrate many (characters or nations). Therefore, Wilhelm's journey is just as significant as that of Mignon, whom Wilhelm rescues and invites into his world. The focus of the novel as a whole is not only about Wilhelm's relationships with the other characters in the novel as they relate to his own personal growth. In a multi-layered

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<sup>42</sup> Zelter set five poems the year the novel was published and eventually wrote six versions of "Kennst du das Land." In 1808 and 1810, Beethoven set "Nur wer die Sehnsucht Kennt" (four versions) and "Kennst du das Land." The first song was set in a simple eighteenth-century style in all four versions. However, Beethoven's setting of "Kennst du das Land" was one of which Goethe did not approve, because the music was too elaborate, according to Goethe, compared to the text. Schubert composed music to all four of Mignon's and the Harper's songs in multiple versions. See Jack M. Stein, "Musical Settings of the Songs from *Wilhelm Meister*," *Comparative Literature* 22 (1970): 125-146.

presentation, Goethe makes the other characters' lives and journeys equally important and significant to the overall plot as Wilhelm's.

Of Schumann's nine-song cycle, four songs are dedicated to Mignon, four feature her father, the Harper, and one song presents the character Philine (Table 2.1). Mignon and the Harper are working through emotional and physical homelessness throughout the cycle. In Mignon's songs (1, 3, 5, and 9) she recounts her abduction from Italy and shows how desperately she wants to return to her homeland. The turning point in Schumann's cycle appears at the end of Song 5—the centerpiece of the cycle. In this song, which begins in C minor and ends in C major, the last *Adagio* section (mm. 54-61) recounts the opening words. Schumann creates a sense of resolve and contentment with a slower tempo and a melody heard in a lower register than heard in the opening measures (Ex. 2.1). This song marks an important transformation in Mignon's emotional state. Her resolve and contentment provided an emotional home that, perhaps, made up for the physical home she was never able to find.

Table 2.1. Outline of Op. 98a

Song #: Key	Character	Song	Explanation
1: G minor	Mignon	"Kennst du das Land" (Do you know this land?)	Mignon is a child who desperately wants to return home to Italy, where she was abducted
2: B-flat major	Harper (Mignon's father via incest)	Harper's Ballad	The King hears the Harper's music and invites him inside the castle – offers him expensive gifts of gold, but the Harper finds reward in the music itself and requests a glass of wine
3: G minor	Mignon	"Nur wer die Sehnsucht Kennt" (Only those who have known helpless love)	One of the best known songs and a duet in the novel – set by Schubert, Wolf, and Tchaikovsky – a song of longing – Mignon compares those who have lost a love with her feelings of grief over having lost her home
4: C minor	Harper	"Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass" (Who never ate his bread in tears)	First song Wilhelm hears when he visits the Harper – avoidance of root position triads – we see inside the Harper's heart – unsettled – feelings of guilt – an emotional and physical homelessness
5: C minor – C major	Mignon	"Heiss' mich reden, heiss mich schweigen" (Bid me not speak – bid me be silent)	Mignon's struggle within herself to reveal a secret – struggle is manifested in the relationship between voice and piano through harmony and interruption – piano sounds "orchestrated" – this song marks a turning point in the cycle – centerpiece – from minor to major – last <i>Adagio</i> section (mm. 54-61) shows that the danger of Mignon's revealing the secret has passed – the lines of opening are repeated in a lower register – not as urgent – resolved – content – this song marks an important transformation in Mignon's emotional state
6: F minor (never really settles) – A-flat major	Harper	"Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergiebt" (Who gives himself to loneliness)	Wilhelm overhears the Harper identifies with him
7: E-flat major	Philine	"Singet nicht in Trauertönen" (Do not sing in mournful tones)	Philine – another character-thread in this novel – she wants less talk about a performance that is being rehearsed, but Wilhelm realizes that the process is important and that there is a need for rehearsal and preparation – this song seems to be less about the character in this particular cycle and more about what transpires between Wilhelm and Philine – perhaps Schumann is calling attention to the importance of looking at the transformation of Mignon/Harper as their characters develop and undergo change within his cycle – that it is not JUST a featuring of two characters in a well known novel – but a character development in both that may be important to audiences in 1849.
8: C minor – C major	Harper	"An die Thüren will ich Schleichen" (From door to door I will steal)	In the novel, this song happens after the Harper attempts to kill a child (Felix) as if he were going to sacrifice him – it's also after a fire that the Harper may have started – at this point the Harper is distracted and full of self-torment, grief, and guilt – the music is unlike the other songs that had various motifs (triplets, chromatic bass line, harp strings) that identified the Harper – simple music, speech-like song – melody derived from words – we sympathize with the Harper in this song
9: G major	Mignon	"So lasst mich scheinen, bis ich werde" (Let me seem to be an angel until I become one)	The passage in the novel that precedes this song describes Mignon dressed as an angel while she distributes Christmas presents to small children – she is ill and near death – several shifts in rhythm and harmony show that a transformation from an earthly life is about to happen

Ex. 2.1. “Heiss’ mich nicht reden,” Op. 98a no. 5, mm. 54-61.

The musical score is for a song by Robert Schumann, Op. 98a no. 5, measures 54-61. It is in B-flat major and 4/4 time, marked 'Adagio'. The score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Heiss' mich nicht re-den, heiss' mich schwei-gen, ein Schwur drückt mir die Lippen zu, und nur ein Gott vermag sie auf-zu-schliessen!". The piano part includes dynamic markings like 'f', 'p', and 'pp', and tempo markings like 'ritard.'. Measure numbers [51] through [61] are indicated at the bottom of the piano part. The score is published by R. S. 145.

Mignon's journey is connected to the Harper's in some ways. First, she is his daughter by an incestuous relationship. Second, they both are in search of emotional and physical security. The Harper, however, does not find a resolution. Schumann makes his songs (2, 4, 6, and 8) a cycle within the larger cycle—a life that is related to Mignon's but follows a different path. The song during which the audience would expect him to reach contentment would have been Song 8—one that begins in C minor and ends in C major like Mignon's "Heiss' mich reden, heiss' mich schweigen" (Song 5, the centerpiece of the cycle). Instead of showing a transformation, the song brings the audience closer to the character. Despite the Harper's actions of the recent past with the child Felix as well as an alleged fire, his self-torment, grief, and guilt cause the audience to sympathize with his character. The music that accompanies these lyrics is

unlike those of Songs 2, 4, and 6. Various musical gestures that were identified with the Harper (triplets, a chromatic bass line, and harp-like arpeggios) are gone. Instead, Schumann presents a simple accompaniment and speech-like song—as if the Harper is bearing his naked soul and refuses to hide behind his music, which has brought him strength and a certain amount of peace through the cycle.

Schumann's presentation of the emotional and physical homelessness of Mignon and the Harper would have spoken to his 1849 audiences. He created a sort of universal presentation in line with Goethe's idea of *Weltliteratur* by showing how the discontent of these two characters was resolved (or not) in different ways. He shows how the two characters are closely connected, despite the different outcomes of their journeys, by the tonal scheme of the cycle as a whole. The C minor/major of Songs 4, 5, and 8 connect Mignon's and the Harper's personal resolve. The G minor/major of Mignon's Songs 1, 3, and 9 not only show her transformation from life on earth to that of an angel in the final song, but also shows her ability to come to terms with a past about which she had little to no control.

Philine's appearance in Song 7 in E-flat major seems a bit odd at first. In this song, Philine wants to rehearse *Hamlet* while Wilhelm is more interested in talking about the play. She is frustrated because she wants immediate action and Wilhelm is, for the moment, more interested in the analysis of the play than the rehearsal of the lines. One may conjecture that Schumann was speaking to his 1849 audiences about patience—a patience that Goethe had learned after the French Revolution and one that Schumann's audiences, who desired immediate action, needed to learn.

Schumann's setting of Goethe's words in 1849 in Op. 98a was a political choice at a time when Schumann's personal world and that of the German states was in a state of emotional and physical homelessness, much like that of Mignon and Harper. He chose to set an author who, for many, represented much that was German in literature. On the other hand, his choice to set Goethe was controversial because many believed that Goethe did not represent Germany at all—especially with his universal view of what literature was to be about. Schumann's choice to set an author with a more universal view of how art spoke to its audience made his choice no less political at a time when his audiences were in search of answers.

#### Fallersleben and Lenau

As with Goethe, Schumann's choice to set texts by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798-1874), Nikolaus Lenau (1802-1850), and Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805) was important because of their place in German political and literary history. Goethe's works inspired a celebration of a common German past that ultimately provided a sense of unity among German-speakers during the mid-nineteenth century. Fallersleben, Lenau, and Schiller were more overtly political than Goethe, certainly. Schumann included their texts as well as texts by Goethe in the *Lieder-Album für die Jugend*, Op. 79 (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1. Texts by Fallersleben, Lenau, Schiller, and Goethe in the Lieder-Album für die Jugend, Op. 79<sup>1</sup>

Number	Title	Author
1	Du lieblicher Stern (Der Abendstern)	Fallersleben
2	O Schmetterling, sprich (Wie gut bin ich dir!)	Fallersleben
3	Kuckuck, Kuckuck, ruft aus dem Wald (Frühlingsbotschaft)	Fallersleben
4	So sei begrüßt viel tausendmal (Frühlings Bewillkommnung)	Fallersleben
5	Kommt, wir wollen uns begeben (Vom Schlaraffenland)	Fallersleben
6	Der Sonntag ist gekommen (Sonntag)	Fallersleben
12	Wie blüht es im Thale (Hinaus ins Freie!)	Fallersleben
15	Der Frühling kehret wieder (Die Waise)	Fallersleben
18	Es war ein Kind', das wollte nie (Die Wandlende Glocke)	Goethe
19	Schneeglöckchen klingen wieder (Frühlingslied)	Fallersleben
20	Nach diesen trüben Tagen (Frühlings-Ankunft)	Fallersleben
23	Ihr Matten, lebt wohl (Der Hirt)	Schiller
26	Mit dem Pfeil, dem Bogen (Des Buben Schützenlied)	Schiller
28	Zum Sehen geboren, zum Schauen bestellt (Lied Lynceus des Thürmers)	Goethe
29	Kennst du das Land, wo die Citronen Blühen (Mignon)	Goethe

Of the authors represented in these songs, Fallersleben's name is the one most frequently encountered. His name, not as well known today as it was during Schumann's time, is most often associated with his poem *Das Lied der Deutschen*. Among the many interests Fallersleben demonstrated early in life, which included Dutch and Old Dutch literature, was the collecting and editing of medieval texts. By 1840, after he traveled to Austria, Switzerland and France, his interests shifted to those of a political nature. After this journey he wrote the very political collection ironically named

<sup>1</sup> Out of the 29 songs of the cycle, Schumann set sixteen texts by these four authors. Other writers featured were Emanuel Geibel (1815-1884), Christian Adolf Overbeck (1755-1821), Hermann Kletke (1813-1886), Christian Friedrich Hebbel (1813-1863), Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875), Melchior von Diepenbrock (1798-1853), Eduard Mörike (1804-1875), Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866), and four selections from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*.



*Unpolitische Lieder*. This collection was a revolutionary set, and it was almost immediately banned in most parts of Germany because of its political nature. In addition, Fallersleben stood trial because of the collection and was dismissed from his post as a German language and literature professor in 1842. From 1842 to 1845 he traveled extensively. When the mid-century revolutions began, Fallersleben did not participate in any way. Instead, it seemed that his primary goal was to make a stable life for his new wife. He sought out employment and was continually rejected because of his early political tendencies. Finally, in 1860, Fallersleben became a librarian for the Corvey Castle located near Höxter. Despite the quietness of his political voice late in life, Fallersleben's political reputation, which he established before the mid-nineteenth century, followed him until his death in 1874.<sup>2</sup>

Fallersleben was also well known for his children's poetry and his folksong collections. In 1842 and 1844 he edited two collections of folksongs called *Schlesische Volkslieder mit Melodien* and *Die deutschen Gesellschaftslieder des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*. He was most interested in preserving a history of the important tradition that folksongs embodied. This interest and subsequent publications made him a significant voice in the continuing stages (begun by Herder and Goethe) of the establishing of community through a celebration of a common German past. In 1843, when Fallersleben wrote "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles" (*Das Lied der Deutschen*), he called for a united Germany at a time when German-speakers

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<sup>2</sup> See Margit L. McCorkle, *Thematic-Bibliographical Catalogue*, 214-217; John Warrack, "Hoffmann von Fallersleben, August Heinrich," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 27 September 2005), <http://www.grovemusic.com>; Franz Josef Degenhardt, *August Heinrich Hoffmann, genannt von Fallersleben* (Munich: C. Bertelsmann, 1991); Ingrid Heinrich-Jost, *August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben* (Berlin: Stapp, 1982); Peter H. Nelde, *Hoffmann von Fallersleben und die Niederlande* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1972); Jürgen Borchert, *Hoffmann von Fallersleben: ein deutsches Dichterschicksal* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1991).

embraced this idea passionately. Most of all, Fallersleben's piece encourages Germans to abandon any personal endeavors and place country first and foremost. Like Schumann, Fallersleben believed in the potency of song as a social and political indoctrinator—something that through music fostered the realization of social solidarity where none existed otherwise.

The words and ideas in *Das Lied der Deutschen* echoed many of the thoughts found in Fallersleben's *Unpolitische Lieder*. In both, Fallersleben emphasized unity in numbers, suggested that music was a means to celebrate Germanness, and equated happiness with unification, justice, and freedom. These ideas were forever associated with the name Hoffmann von Fallersleben. One may conjecture that Schumann's prominent placement of Fallersleben's poetry in Op. 79 showed that the composer embraced the poet's search for personal happiness through the unity of a nation.

The ideas that Schumann embraced in the works of Fallersleben were similar to the ones he appreciated in the poetry of Nikolaus Lenau. Lenau (born Nikolaus Franz Niembsch Edler von Strehlenau) was an Austro-Hungarian poet whose reputation was marked by his capricious personal character, his inability to settle down, and his lifelong search for personal and political stability.<sup>3</sup> He attended, but never graduated from, the Universities of Pressburg, Vienna, and Heidelberg, and studied law, agriculture, and medicine.<sup>4</sup> After he inherited a large sum of money that allowed him to be financially independent, Lenau published a collection of poetry that received favorable reviews

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<sup>3</sup> Lenau was more "German," specifically Austrian, than "Hungarian." He was born in Hungary because his father happened to be working there at the time. Lenau was, incidentally, known to claim Hungarian citizenship, however, when he was in trouble with the Austrian censors.

<sup>4</sup> He also studied philosophy, religion, mathematics, physics, history, and Hungarian and Austrian law. As with Schumann, Lenau's knowledge was very broad and covered a variety of disciplines and subjects. See Hugo Schmidt, *Nikolaus Lenau* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1971).

from literary Germany in 1832. Lenau's unrest and unresolve continued, however, and he made his way to America to search for personal and artistic contentment. In 1833 Lenau returned to Germany and continued to build his reputation in literary circles. While he completed several volumes of poetry, Lenau also wrote the plays, *Faust* (1836) and *Savonarola* (1837). Lenau's own search for love, a country, a career, and ultimately, himself, were never fully resolved when he died in 1850, after spending six years in an asylum. He eventually settled in Germany and made a name for himself as a poet; his work was best known for its intensity, melancholy, and unrest.<sup>5</sup>

After 1848, Schumann also searched for personal and political stability, similar to Fallersleben and Lenau. A few months before Lenau died, Schumann officially accepted the position of Municipal Music Director in Düsseldorf. The Schumanns' move was one of searching—a search for success and acceptance. Initially, Schumann's search seemed fruitful in Düsseldorf, as he experienced an exciting welcome that included concerts of his own works, a full schedule of conducting and rehearsing, and opportunities directing performances at the two main Catholic churches, St. Lambertus and Maximiliankirche. By March 1851, however, Schumann experienced some of the same frustrations that Mendelssohn had years before, and Schumann's relationships with the mayor and musicians were full of disagreements and discontent on both sides.

One may infer that Schumann personally identified with Nikolaus Lenau, who

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<sup>5</sup> See Schmidt; Sara Rosado, "Liszt, Lenau, and the Four Mephisto Waltzes," *The Journal of the American Liszt Society* 45 (Spring 1999), 34-45; Matthias Wiegandt, "Genrebilder? Traurige Liebesgeschichte? Zyklus? Nikolaus Lenaus Schilflieder aus der Sicht ihrer Komponisten," *Musik in Baden-Württemberg* 4 (1997), 53-85; Klaus Velten, "Robert Schumanns Lenau-Vertonungen Op. 90," *Robert Schumann: Philologische, Analytische, Sozial- und Rezeptionsgeschichtliche Aspekte Saarbrücken* (1998), 90-96; Peter Conrad, "The Libertine's Progress," *Don Giovanni: Myths of Seduction and Betrayal* (New York: Schocken, 1990), 81-92; Wilhelm Killmayer, "Schumann und Seine Dichter," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* CXLII/3 (1981), 231-36.

spent his entire life searching for answers. More importantly, Schumann seemingly identified Lenau's life of search with the general sentiment of the German people at the time. In 1851, at the time Schumann experienced communicative misunderstandings with the people of Düsseldorf, he led a chorus who would not respond to his style of conducting, read unfavorable reviews of his new music, and composed *Vier Husarenlieder*, Op. 117 to texts by Nikolaus Lenau.<sup>6</sup> By choosing Lenau's work, Schumann showed not only his own participation in a search for an improved and more secure quality of life, but also the general search that dominated all who had experienced the turmoil and insecurity caused by the mid-century revolutions.

Lenau, whose poetry was written between the Congress of Vienna and the Revolutions of 1848, was an artist who was not easily defined politically, because of his constant search for a political identity and a stable homeland. He was most politically active before he traveled to America in 1832. He did not agree with the powerful Austrian monarchy and wrote such poems as *Abschied* (Farewell), in which the character left his home just as Lenau did in search for a better, less politically unstable country. While Lenau visited America, he wrote poetry exclusively about Europe, and during this time his political views changed. He lived in Pennsylvania and spent time with members of *The Harmony Society*, an organization that did not believe in Andrew Jackson's ideas of democracy. During this year in America, Lenau decided that he was against political revolt, and, just as Schumann would show seventeen years later, was against political change through violence. Lenau became disillusioned with the struggle

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<sup>6</sup> The people of Düsseldorf were very social for the most part and mistakenly attributed his frequent silence in public to that of outright rudeness. Ferdinand Hiller, who had preceded Schumann in the position of conductor, conducted the orchestra and chorus in a very intense fashion. Apparently, Schumann was not as disciplined and, therefore, the ensemble did not respond as musically or cleanly as they were capable as they might have. See Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, pp. 439-458.

for freedom and decided that such a struggle would eventually lead to disaster. He believed at this time that the monarchy was a sort of protection and that personal freedom would lead to eventual destruction.<sup>7</sup> In many ways, it appears that Lenau's beliefs were consistent with those of Goethe years earlier.<sup>8</sup>

When Lenau returned to Germany, he retained his new views and argued, "true freedom can only live within our hearts."<sup>9</sup> In 1836, Lenau was charged with publishing political poetry outside Austria without first submitting his work to the Austrian censors. However, his later pieces did not show an interest in the political events of the outside world.<sup>10</sup> Lenau was, perhaps, able to establish personal freedom through his art. At the very least, his poetry posed important questions that inspired his audiences to attempt answers. Op. 117 is one such work in which Lenau showed his own struggle with issues that dominated European culture at the time, and Schumann responded by providing musical answers.

#### *Vier Husarenlieder, Op. 117:* Search for Identity, Purpose, and Connection

Op. 117 is a cycle of four songs that are bound together by subject and key. The cycle centers on a hussar<sup>11</sup> whose actions are described by a narrator in the first and

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<sup>7</sup> See Schmidt, *Nikolaus Lenau*, pp. 68-98.

<sup>8</sup> See Karl J. R. Arndt, "The Effect of America on Lenau's Life and Work," *The Germanic Review* 33 (1958): 125-142; John C. Blankenagel, "Deeds to Lenau's Property in Ohio," *The Germanic Review* 2 (1927): 202-212.

<sup>9</sup> Anton X. Schurz, *Lenau's Leben*, Volume I (Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1855), 224. Trans. Hugo Schmidt.

<sup>10</sup> At the time Lenau claimed Hungarian citizenship and stated that he was unaware of the law. The authorities eventually dropped the charges.

<sup>11</sup> Can be defined a number of ways: first as a highway robber or pirate. Probably the meaning in the poetry of Op. 117 has to do with some kind of soldier. In 1532 a "hussar" was a member of any of the various European army units originally modeled on the Hungarian light cavalry of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

fourth songs and presented in first person in the second and third songs. Schumann composed the first song in B-flat major and proceeds in descending thirds with the following songs (G-minor, E-flat major, C-minor). The first song introduces the character and describes him in a celebratory manner:

Der Husar,  
Trara!  
Was ist die Gefahr?  
Sein herzlichster Schatz!  
Sie winkt, mit einem Satz  
Ist er da, trara!

Der Husar,  
Trara!  
Was ist die Gefahr?  
Sein Wein; flink! flink!  
Säbel link! Säbel trink!  
Trink Blut! trara!

Der Husar,  
Trara!  
Was ist die Gefahr?  
Sein herzlichster Klang,  
Sein Leibgesang,  
Schlafgesang, trara!

(Hurrah for the hussar! What's danger to him? His dearest sweetheart! She beckons, with a bound he's at her side, trara!/Hurrah for the hussar! What's danger to him? His wine; let it swiftly flow! His flashing sabre! Let it drink! Drink blood! Trara!/Hurrah for the hussar! What's danger to him? The sound he loves best, his favorite song, his lullaby, trara!)

Lenau presented a confident hero who nobly protected his sweetheart. The first verse describes the main character and his sweetheart, and the second verse places wine and blood in close proximity with one another. This placement may suggest that the two liquids are interchangeable or that the hussar's wine is, in fact, blood. Lenau gives a certain action to the hussar's sword, an inanimate object that is able to drink. While the

hussar drinks wine, the sword drinks blood. These two actions may be two separate ones or the same, depending on how the reader interprets the hussar's relationship with the sword. The third verse, which begins like the first two, introduces the hussar's song, a third element related to the main character. The song, like the sweetheart and the wine is capable of action related to the main character.

Example 2.2 shows the first song of Op. 117. The motive found in the short piano introduction announcing the beginning of the cycle dominates Schumann's strophic setting of Lenau's first poem. This heroic motive (the familiar horn motive) is symbolic of the confident nature of the hussar. After the horn motive, the singer enters with the text, "Hurrah for the hussar! What is danger to him?" Schumann accompanies this text with full chords going from I, to V, to V/vi, to vi, to vii chord in the space of four measures. Schumann's quickly changing harmonies and rapidly changing ranges in the piano suggest that the description of the hussar is not all that it seems. While Eric Sams believes that the "ostensible mood is one of bluff assurance,"<sup>12</sup> a more convincing interpretation is that the hussar is confident in his abilities but searches for a way to direct his energies. The song's rapid harmonic movement, deceptive resolutions, quick changes in range, and abrupt musical gestures suggest that Schumann's hussar is not quite one with his world. The hussar's own search for contentment, heard in the piano accompaniment, is consistent with the search that Lenau attempted during his seemingly unresolved lifetime. Schumann recognized the value of the idea of search at a time when his audiences searched for stability.

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<sup>12</sup> Eric Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*. p. 263.

Ex. 2.2. "Der Husar, trara!" Op. 117 no. 1.

2 (52)

# Vier Husarenlieder

von Nicolaus Lenau

Schumann's Werke.

für eine Bariton - Stimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte

Serie 13. N°20.

von  
ROBERT SCHUMANN.

Op. 117.

Dem Sänger Heinrich Behr gewidmet.

## N°1.

Mit wild feurigem Ausdruck. J.=84.

Componirt 1851.

Der Husar, tra - ra! was ist die Ge - fahr? Sein herz - lieb - ster

Schatz! Sie winkt, mit ei - nem Satz ist er da, tra - ra!

ist er da, tra - ra!

Der Hu - sar, tra - ra! was ist die Ge - fahr? Sein Wein; flink!

R.S. 148.

Verlag von Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig.

Abgegeben 1887.



flink! Säbel blink! Säbel trink! Trink Blut, tra - ra! Trink

Blut! tra - ra! Der Husar, tra -

ra! was ist die Ge-fahr? Sein herz - lieb - ster Klang, sein Leib - ge - sang, Schlafge -

sang, tra - ra! Schlafge - sang! tra - ra!

R. S. 148.

Schumann's musical setting of Op. 117 no. 2, "Der leidige Frieden" (The tedious peace), features a dramatic personification of the hussar's sword. Lenau's presentation of the sword in this song outshines that of the character of his hussar. Schumann responds to this personification by G-minor harmonies and by a through-composed setting in the final verse. Furthermore, there are several elements presented that are opposite in nature: hateful peace, blood dried, deadly song, thirsty blade, and speechless tongue. Also present are themes of separation: the hussar and his sword, the sword from a shiny, clean exterior, the hussar and war, and the sword and blood.

Schumann responds to these elements of opposites and separation in the piano accompaniment. First, he varies his textures. While the piano begins with mostly four- or more-part chordal harmonies from mm. 1-12, Schumann contrasts this texture with hollow octaves in the left hand, doubled by a single note in the right hand (Ex. 2.3). Even though this gesture is not sustained, Schumann creates a haunting quality in the music, as the poetry describes the sword hanging alone on the wall. The accompaniment emphasizes the isolation of the sword that is without a purpose—a sword in search of a war.

The significance of the sword is displayed more significantly in Schumann's musical interpretation to the final verse of the poem. Finally, the sword finds its resolve, sheds the rust, and vacates its lonely place on the wall. As the sword yearns for war, fresh blood, and death, Schumann writes music that is primarily strophic. However, when the sword drinks real blood and savors the action of war in the final verse, Schumann's music is more rhythmically active, harmonically chromatic, and texturally thick. The dynamic level is primarily *forte* and Schumann includes several accents on

Ex. 2.3. "Der leidige Frieden hat lange gewährt," Op. 117 no. 2.

4 (54)

Nº 2.

Nicht schnell.  $\text{♩} = 112$ .

Der lei-di-ge Frieden hat lan-ge gewährt, wir  
 wa-ren geschieden, mein gu-tes Schwert! der- weil ich ge-ko-stet im Kel-ler den  
 Wein, hingst— du ver-rostet an der Wand al-lein. Von Sor-te zu Sor-te pro-  
 birt' ich den Wein, in- dessen dorrt' das Blut dir ein. Ist end-lich ent-glom-men der  
 hei-ße Streit, mein Schwert, und ge-kom-men ist dei-ne Zeit. Ich

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6]  
 [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11]  
 [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] [17]  
 [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] [23] [24]  
 [25] [26] [27] [28] [29] [30]

R.S. 148.

geb' deiner Klingen den blanken Schliff, ich lasse dich singen den To-despfiff, im

Pul - ver - ne - bel die Ar - beit rauscht, wir ha - ben, o Sä - bel, die

Freuden getauscht. Im brausenden Mo-ste, mein durstiges Erz, be - trinke dich, koste von

Herz zu Herz; der - weil du ge - ko - stet das ro - the Blut,

ist mir ein - ge - ro - stet der Hals vor Gluth.

R. S. 148.

the first beats of measures.

While Eric Sams hears "crazed sabre strokes swinging wildly to left and right, ending in agonized discords in the postlude,"<sup>13</sup> this kind of word painting is too obvious for the late Schumann. Schumann, instead, shows the significance of the sword and the centrality of the sword's search – a search that is symbolic of the search of his audiences at the time. Schumann's primary message, however, occurs in the final 9 measures of the second song. As the sword savors the red blood (seemingly the goal for the sword all along), Schumann writes a very strong arrival on D-major in m. 54. As the text describes the hussar's speechlessness at the sword's joy, dominant harmonies prevail. The final measure ends with a *subito forte* G-minor chord on the 2<sup>nd</sup> beat. The ending is abrupt and shocking in harmony, beat-placement, and dynamic level. Schumann's musical gesture suggests that the resolution that the sword experiences is not really a resolution at all. The textual meaning may not be what it seems, and the search continues.

"Den grünen Zeigern," (Green wine-bushes), the third song in the cycle, features elements in the hussar's life that have taken on a different meaning. He views elements differently after the experience of war. Schumann repeats the first verse musically reemphasizing the reinterpretation of various elements, which include the bush, red cheeks, and music. The accompaniment in the repeat has a thicker texture, a more active left hand part, and rhythmic variety (triplets in m. 30).

The fourth song, "Da liegt der Feinde gestreckte Schaar" (there lies the foe stretched out), describes the aftermath of all for which the hussar has yearned during

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<sup>13</sup> Sams, 264.

the previous three songs. He inspects his enemy, covered in blood and spread out on the battlefield. He detects the fear experienced during the battle. The third verse depicts another call to battle, and the hussar wipes his blood-covered sword onto his horse, whose hooves are already covered with blood.

While Lenau gives a morbid resolve to the hussar's violent search, Schumann musically interprets the situation differently. The beginning piano motive, which is repeated four times, reminds the listener of the initial piano motive found in Song 1. The triplet figure in both cases travels from tonic to dominate. Schumann's reinterpretation of the motive as well as his repetition of the motive, suggests motion and forward movement. The last presentation of the motive occurs in an augmented form in the final two bars of the final piece in the left hand (Ex. 2.4). On the one hand, Schumann chooses to end the motive on the tonic, which creates resolution; however, the tremolo in the left hand, accompanying a 6/4 tonic (major) chord in the right hand, compromises a true sense of resolve. Schumann's ending gesture creates continuance and a story that has not ended. The theme of continued search is central to Op. 117. Op. 117 validates the idea of search. Schumann's musical presentation of Lenau's poetry leaves the hussar's search open. The composer, unlike the poet, does not allow resolve to the hussar's search. At the beginning of the cycle, the hussar knows what he wants, knows who he is, and knows how to satisfy himself. By the end of the cycle, however, Schumann's hussar still searches, despite his experiences of war. The experiences of war have not satisfied his search, and his journey continues. By March of 1851, when this cycle was completed, the revolutions begun in 1848 were still fresh on the minds of those who lived in Europe. This year was a time when reflection began

Ex. 2.4. "Da liegt der Feinde gestreckte Schaar," Op. 117 no. 4.

No 4.

$\text{♩} = 92.$

Da liegt — der Fein-de ge - streckte Schaar, sie

liegt in ihrem blutro - then Blut, wie haut er so scharf, wie haut er so gut der flinke Hu -

sar! Da lie - gen sie, ha! so bleich und roth, es

zittern und wanken noch, husch! husch! ihre Seelen auf seinem Fe - derbusch, da liegen sie

R. S. 148.

todt. Und wei - ter ruft der Trom - pe - ten - ruf, er  
 wischt an die Mähne sein nas - ses Schwert, und wei - ter springt sein lu - sti - ges Pferd, mit  
 ro - - them Huf.  
 trem.



and questions asked before 1848 remained unanswered. Schumann had always been opposed to violence and offered in this cycle an opportunity for his audiences to reflect and to continue to search for answers.

### Friedrich Schiller

Another poet whose life and work were marked by themes of search was Friedrich Schiller. Schiller's search was for personal and political freedom, and through his writings, he became very specific with how the individual was to go about attaining these freedoms. In one of the preserved letters to Prince Friedrich Christian von Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, who was Schiller's most generous patron later in his life, Schiller wrote,

Daß ich dieser reizenden Versuchung widerstehe und die Schönheit der Freiheit vorangehen lasse, glaube ich nicht bloß mit meiner Neigung entschuldigen, sondern durch Grundsätze rechtfertigen zu können. Ich hoffe, Sie zu überzeugen, daß diese Materie weit weniger dem Bedürfnis als dem Geschmack des Zeitalters fremd ist, ja daß man, um jenes politische Problem in der Erfahrung zu lösen, durch das ästhetische den Weg nehmen muß, weil es die Schönheit ist, durch welche man zu der Freiheit wandert.

(That I resist this seductive temptation, and put Beauty before Freedom, can, I believe, not only be excused on the score of personal inclination, but also justified on principle. I hope to convince you that the theme I have chosen is far less alien to the needs of our age than to its taste. More than this: if man is ever to solve that problem of politics in practice he will have to approach it through the problems of the aesthetic, because it is only through Beauty that man makes his way to Freedom.<sup>14</sup>)

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<sup>14</sup> See E. M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters*. Edited and translated with an introduction, Commentary and Glossary of Terms (Oxford, 1967), pp. 8-9; Lesley Sharpe, *Friedrich Schiller: Drama, Thought and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 146-169; W. Böhm, *Schillers Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung* (Halle/Saale, 1927); W. Düsing, *Friedrich Schiller "Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen". Text, Materialien, Kommentar* (Munich, 1981).

The surviving letters, published as *Briefe über die Ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (or just *Ästhetische Briefe*), include many of Schiller's ideas about political, personal, and artistic freedom.<sup>15</sup>

In Schiller's early writings, there was a tension between his ideas regarding an establishment of peace and harmony in the world and a total escape from the world by the individual. In the *Ästhetische Briefe*, however, he resolved these tensions. He wrote about one's ability to become part of the solution to the world's problems instead of seeking escape. Schiller suggested that the artist carried a significant amount of responsibility in this context. The artist, according to Schiller, promoted and encouraged change for the rest of humanity through his art. Schiller argued that the human imagination made the world whole—especially when wars and rebellions would not necessarily establish the same. His examination of the function of art as a solution to societal problems, within a world that had been completely turned upside down by the French Revolution, showed that he did not embrace the means by which the French went about change.<sup>16</sup>

Schumann studied Schiller's works throughout his life. Between 1825 and 1828 Schumann founded a literary club (*Litterarischer Verein*) with ten other students to study German literature. Schumann wrote "it is the duty of every cultivated individual to know

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<sup>15</sup> Six letters plus a supplement to one of the letters survive. They were written in 1793 on February 9, July 13, November 11 (plus a supplement), November 21, December 3, and the final letter was dated only December, 1793, with no specific day. These were copies of the originals. The originals were kept by the Prince and amounted to more than six. All of the originals were destroyed in a fire in 1794.

<sup>16</sup> See Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *Kant und Schiller als Zeitgenossen der Französischen Revolution* (London: Institute of Germanic Studies, 1986); Gerhart Horrmeyer, *The French Revolution and the Age of Goethe* (New York: G. Olms, 1989).

the literature of his fatherland..."<sup>17</sup> The group read aloud, studied biography, and shared original writings. Between January 16, 1826 and March 1827, the literary club read and studied eight of Schiller's plays including *Mary Stuart*, published in 1801.<sup>18</sup>

In this historical drama Schiller examined the individual's place within a complicated political context through Mary's experiences. The story of Elizabeth and Mary, loosely based on historical fact, juxtaposed worldly duty with personal credibility.<sup>19</sup> The play focused on the individuality of Mary, who struggled with the emotional balance between hope and disaster. In the end, Mary's sources of hope (Mortimer, Leicester, and, finally, Elizabeth) were not enough to save her life. While disaster was obvious from the beginning of the play, Schiller presented alternatives while the audience waited with Mary.

The play not only presents a personal struggle in the mind of Mary, but also an idealized struggle in Elizabeth's feeling of disharmony with her world. Even though Elizabeth was in a place of power, Schiller presented her emotional state as one that was full of turmoil. She struggled with her subjects, who paid their allegiance to Mary, and with the grave responsibility and consequences of Mary's execution. In the end, Schiller's presentation of this lawful murder showed that the woman who was executed within the laws of the political system was the one who truly became free.

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<sup>17</sup> See Martin Schoppe, "Schumanns Litterarischer Verein," in *Robert Schumann und die Dichter*, ed. Appel and Hermstrüwer (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1991), 21.

<sup>18</sup> See Daverio, *Schumann*, especially "The Formation of a Musico-Literary Sensibility," pp. 20-54. The plays studied included *Die Braut von Messina*, *Fiesco*, *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*, *Maria Stuart*, *Wilhelm Tell*, *Die Räuber*, *Kabale und Liebe*, and *Don Carlos*.

<sup>19</sup> In some parts of the drama, Schiller took considerable liberty in the name of presenting his points. For instance, at the end of Schiller's drama, Elizabeth and Mary meet face to face. This meeting actually never took place historically. Schiller's goal, however, was to continue his juxtaposition of the two women's experiences, decisions, and placement in the tension-filled situation. The meeting between them served as a culminating point in the drama.

The play was not an idealistic portrayal of Mary, however. Instead, it was about the juxtaposition of the political world (represented by Elizabeth), which allowed lawful murder, and the moral decisions of the individual (represented by Mary) within that sometimes-unforgiving system. Mary transcended the moment by accepting her death even though, as Schiller interpreted, her execution was an unjust act. Mary was true to herself and stood by the decisions that she had made as an individual. Elizabeth was trapped as an emotional prisoner and was never able to resolve her anxieties about herself or the political system of which she was such a large part.<sup>20</sup>

After careful study of Schiller's works throughout his life, Schumann admired Schiller's understanding of the artist's important role in a sometimes-hostile worldly environment. Schumann's inclusion of Schiller's text in Op. 79 in 1849 was arguably political. In 1852, Schumann composed his last song cycle, *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart*, Op. 135. Even though Op. 135 was not necessarily based on Schiller's play, there is compelling evidence in Schumann's musical portrayal of Mary Stuart that shows that his political thinking was likely influenced by Schiller's.<sup>21</sup> The same aspects of Mary's life and death that appealed to Schiller shortly after the French Revolution may have also appealed to Schumann shortly after the mid-century revolutions.

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<sup>20</sup> In addition to Schiller's play, see Susan Frye and Karen Robertson, *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Jane Dunn, *Elizabeth and Mary: Cousins, Rivals, Queens* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf distributed by Random House, 2004).

<sup>21</sup> In addition to two songs that featured Schiller's texts in Op. 79, Schumann also used Schiller's "Vor seinem Löwengarten" in the song "Der Handschuh." See McCorkle, *Thematic-Bibliographical Catalogue*, pp. 382-389.

Some time during the nearly nineteen years that Mary Stuart (1542-1587) was Elizabeth's (1558-1603)<sup>22</sup> prisoner in England, Mary changed her personal motto to that of her mother, Mary of Guise. The new motto, which was sewn onto her cloth of state hung in her prison chamber, read "En ma fin est mon commencement," or "In my end is my beginning." Historians, scholars, authors, and composers, including Robert Schumann, have focused their works and writings on her death ever since. The question that arises is why has Mary's life and, more importantly, death, appealed to post-sixteenth-century artists—especially after times of political turmoil in their own lives.<sup>23</sup>

The answer to this question lies in what Mary's existence symbolized for those who lived several centuries after she died. On the one hand, Mary's death was one of the most famous regicides in history and, as a result, changed the way the people regarded the monarchy. Her death made the established aristocracy vulnerable. When authors such as Schiller and composers such as Schumann chose Mary's death as their focal point, they reminded their own audiences that the power of the aristocracy was not untouchable.

At the same time, however, the dignified way Mary faced her death was inspiring in and of itself. While her death represented the death of monarchical power in some respects, it also represented a personal stand against the political establishment. Both Schiller and Schumann were conflicted in their dealings with the outside, established,

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<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth I, daughter of Anne Boleyn, second wife to Henry VIII (1509-1547) married in 1533 and executed in 1536.

<sup>23</sup> For an in depth study of Mary's life drawn from primary sources, see John Guy, *Queen of Scots: The True Life of Mary Stuart* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004); Antonia Fraser, *Mary Queen of Scots* (New York: Dell, 1969); Sir Arthur Salusbury MacNalty, *Mary Queen of Scots: the Daughter of Debate* (London: Christopher Johnson, 1960); Alison Plowden, *Elisabeth Tudor and Mary Stewart: Two Queens in One Isle* (New Jersey: Barnes and Noble Books, 1984).

world. On the one hand, they desired total escape from the world—sometimes through their art. On the other hand, they desired an establishment of peace and harmony in the world and chose, in the end, to contribute to this peace through their art. Both artists seemed to look to Mary at critical times during their own political histories as a way to speak to change. In this way, Mary represented the individual who had the courage to stand up against strong political forces despite the risk of death. In her death, Schiller and Schumann recognized what Mary predicted her legacy would become: “In my end is my beginning.” In Op. 135, Schumann, who may have been inspired by Schiller’s play, saw Mary’s strength as an individual, her ability to persevere despite feeling alone, her status in life and death as a hero, and her choice to lean on God instead of depending on man.

#### George Gordon Byron

Three years before Schumann composed the Mary Stuart songs, he wrote *Gesänge aus Lord Byrons “Hebräischen Gesänge,”* Op. 95 (Hebrew Melodies, trans. Körner). Like Mary Stuart, Byron was a figure who was not German but whose life, and, especially, death, inspired German poets, artists, and composers as evidenced by Josef Danhauser’s *Liszt am Flügel*, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (Figure 2.2). After Byron’s death in 1824, artists idolized parts of his life experiences and characters that he created in his works, and used them as a way to communicate their own desires for political and personal freedom. The combination of Byron’s fictional heroes and anti-heroes and of Byron’s persona (re)created by biographers after his death, presented a

perfect combination of the romantic hero that inspired artists in their own works after 1824.<sup>24</sup>

Schumann's musical relationship with Byron began in 1827 when he set a translation of Byron's "I saw thee weep" (Schumann's *Die Weinende*) to music. Schumann's father, August, made part of his living by translating and publishing what he believed to be great literature into German. Shortly after Byron's death (1824), August translated Byron until his own death in 1826. In 1840, Schumann included Byron's "My Soul is Dark" in *Myrthen*, Op. 25 (no. 15). Sometime between 1840 and 1843, Schumann looked to Byron in an opera that he began but never completed, based on *The Corsair*. Between 1848 and 1849, he composed the incidental music to Byron's *Manfred*, probably the best-known work by Schumann setting texts by Byron.<sup>25</sup>

Schumann read K. A. Suckow's translation of *Manfred* on July 29, 1848 and immediately planned a work based on Byron's drama that included spoken dialogue and 15 movements of solos, ensembles, instrumental interludes, choruses, melodramas and other music. The work was completed very quickly in October and November. Schumann's *Manfred* differs from Byron's slightly. In addition to omitting some small parts, he added a requiem at the end, which gave closure to Manfred's tortured life and desire for forgiveness (or forgetfulness) portrayed in the original poem. Schumann's interpretation was still tragic, however, since redemption was realized musically only

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<sup>24</sup> See James C. McKusick, "The Politics of Language in Byron's *The Island*," *ELH* 59 no. 4 (Winter, 1992), 839-856; Daniel P. Watkins, "Violence, Class Consciousness, and Ideology in Byron's History Plays," *ELH* 48 no. 4 (Winter, 1981) 799-816; Lee Sterrenburg, "The Last Man: Anatomy of Failed Revolutions," *Nineteenth Century Fiction* 33 no. 3 (December, 1978), 324-347; John Wilkes, *Lord Byron and Madame de Staël: Born for Opposition* (London: Ashgate, 1999); Stephen Cheeke, *Byron and Place: History, Translation, Nostalgia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

<sup>25</sup> While Schumann worked on *Manfred*, he was also working on *Szenen aus Goethes Faust*.

after Manfred's death. Byron's work suggested that only in death would Manfred be able to gain closure. Schumann's work provided the closure.<sup>26</sup>

Schumann's last setting of Byron's poetry transpired a month after he completed *Manfred* in December 1849. The theme of redemption was still a focus when Schumann composed the three-song cycle *Gesänge aus Lord Byrons "Hebräischen Gesänge"*, Op. 95.<sup>27</sup> Schumann used Justinus Körner's translation. Byron based his original poems (Figure 2.3) on the Old Testament's book of Judges, Chapter 11.

*Figure 2.3. Byron's Texts to Schumann's Op. 95*

Jephthah's Daughter (Schumann's Op. 95 no. 1)

Since our Country, our God—oh, my Sire!  
Demand that thy daughter expire;  
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—  
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!  
And the voice of my mourning is o'er,  
And the mountains behold me no more;  
If the hand that I love lay me low,  
There cannot be pain in the blow!  
And of this, oh, my Father! Be sure—  
That the blood of thy child is pure  
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,  
And the last thought that soothes me below.  
Though the virgins of Salem lament,  
Be the judge and the hero unbent!  
I have won the great battle for thee,  
And my Father and Country are free!  
When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,  
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,  
Let my memory still be thy pride,

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<sup>26</sup> See Samuel C. Chew, *The Dramas of Lord Byron* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1915); Jochen Clement, "Lesedrama und Schauspielmusik: Zu Schumanns *Manfred* Op. 115," *Schumann-Studien* 5 (1996): 143-152; John Daverio, "Manfred and the Modern Drama," *Robert Schumann*, 356-64; Elizabeth Paley, "'The Voice which was my Music': Narrative and Nonnarrative Musical Discourse in Schumann's *Manfred*," *Nineteenth Century Music* 24 no. 1 (Summer, 2000): 3-20.

<sup>27</sup> Schumann had completed Op. 98a setting parts of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* during the summer of 1849.



And forget not that I smiled as I died.  
To the Moon (Schumann's Op. 95 no. 2)

Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star!  
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,  
That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,  
How like art thou  
To joy remembered well!  
So gleams the past, the light of other days,  
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;  
A night-beam Sorrow  
Watcheth to behold,  
Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold!

To the Hero (Schumann's Op. 95 no. 3)

Thy days are done, thy fame begun;  
Thy country's strains record  
The triumphs of her chosen Son,  
The slaughters of his sword!  
The deeds he did, the fields he won,  
The freedom he restored!  
Though thou art fall'n, while we are free  
Thou shalt not taste of death!  
The generous blood that flowed from thee  
Disdain'd to sink beneath:  
Within our veins its currents be,  
Thy spirit on our breath.  
Thy name, our charging hosts along,  
Shall be the battle word!  
Thy fall, the theme of choral song  
From virgin voices pour'd!  
To weep would do thy glory wrong;  
Though shalt not be deplored.

The story is one of personal redemption, honor, commitment, obedience, and sacrifice.

Jephthah the Gileadite, the son of Gilead and a prostitute, was driven away from his home. His half-brothers sent him away, because they were afraid he would inherit part of their father's fortunes. Years later Jephthah, who was a skilled and respected warrior, was asked to return to lead the fight against the Ammonites. Jephthah agreed, and while he and his troops prepared for battle, he made a vow to God,

If you give the Ammonites into my hands, whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in triumph from the Ammonites will be the Lord's, and I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering.<sup>28</sup>

Jephthah defeated the Ammonites. To his dismay, the first person who greeted him when he came back home was his only child, a daughter. Her request as she nobly received the news of Jephthah's vow with God was that he allow her "two months to roam the hills and weep with [her] friends, because [she] will never marry."<sup>29</sup> It is a custom that every year, young Israeli women remember her sacrifice for her father and for her country by spending four days out in the wilderness.

In these poems, Schumann recognized the importance of the father and daughter's willingness to sacrifice themselves for God and country. Jephthah was able to redeem himself and his name by coming back to defend his homeland. Jephthah's daughter recognized that her sacrifice made her father and her country free. Neither the father nor the daughter chose their fate. They were called to serve—one to fight and one to die—and accepted the call with courage. The story is one of the relationship between a man and his country, certainly. At the same time, however, it is one between a father and a daughter. The strong bond between Jephthah and his daughter had to be in place before Jephthah could be successful on the battlefield. Through Byron, Jephthah's daughter makes this point clear:

Though the virgins of Salem lament,  
Be the judge and the hero unbent!  
I have won the great battle for thee,  
And my Father and Country are free!

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<sup>28</sup> Judges Chapter 11: 30-31. *The Holy Bible New International Version* (Michigan, Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1984), 186.

<sup>29</sup> Judges, 11:37.

Schumann's setting further emphasizes the importance of these lines. The composer augments the vocal line (mm. 26-41, Ex. 2.5) and extends the range of the arpeggiated accompaniment (for harp or piano).<sup>30</sup> The expanded affect supports the confidence with which Jephthah's daughter is willing to sacrifice herself. Especially striking is the B-flat heard on the third beat of m. 32, which was not heard at parallel points (mm. 12 and 20) in the first two verses. It accompanies "nicht verzagt!" (not disheartened or despaired) and stands out both musically and textually in support of the daughter's willingness to sacrifice herself. The third and fourth lines of this verse are equally striking musically (mm. 34-42) and textually. Schumann introduces a new melodic phrase not heard previously in the vocal line. The line continues in the augmented form introduced in m. 27. Schumann respells the G-flat heard in the vocal line on beat one of m. 36 to an F-sharp on beat one of m. 40 which accompanies the final words of the phrase, "Heimath sind frei!" (Homeland are free!). On the first beat of m. 41 to the word "frei," the singer reaches her goal both textually and musically. The g<sup>2</sup> is the highest note heard from the vocalist. The respelling of the G-flat (m. 36) to the F-sharp (m. 40) emphasizes this arrival on g<sup>2</sup> in m. 41. The musical goal accompanied by G-major arpeggios on the first two beats of m. 41 supports the textual goal of freedom – the outcome of the sacrifice made by Jephthah and his daughter.

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<sup>30</sup> Schumann's preference for accompaniment may have been the harp since he underlined it in the autograph. There was an important sub-culture of harp performers during the nineteenth century who toured and performed in the streets, markets, and fairs. Their songs focused on both tragic and vulgar subjects. Schumann's use of this instrument in this piece could have emphasized, further, Jephthah's rise from a lowly place to one of hero and savior. Also, Schumann may have wanted to inspire the lower classes with his piece, and by using the instrument of the harp, may have inspired them to rise above their class or station and fight for a better way of life.

Ex. 2.5. "Da die Heimath, o Vater" (Die Tochter Jephta's), Op. 95 no. 1.

2 (126)

# DREI GESÄNGE

aus Lord Byron's Hebräischen Gesängen

für eine Singstimme mit Begleitung der Harfe oder des Pianoforte

Schumann's Werke.

von

Serie 13. N<sup>o</sup> 25.

ROBERT SCHUMANN.

Op. 95.

Fräulein Constanze Jacobi zugeweiht.

## Die Tochter Jephta's.

N<sup>o</sup> 1.

Mit Affect.  $\text{♩} = 126$ .

Componirt 1849.

Da die Hei - math, o Va - ter, da

Gott von der Toch - ter ver - lan - get den Tod, dein Ge - lüb - de vom

Feind uns be - freit, durch - bohrt mich, ich ste - he be -

reit! Und die Stim - me der Kla - gen ist stumm, und mein Werk auf den

Verlag von Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig.

R. S. 143.

Ausgegeben 1847.

*sp*

Ber - gen ist um! Wird die Hand, die ich lie - be, mich weilen,

[ 13 ] *sp* [ 14 ] [ 15 ]

kann der Tod ja nicht schmerz - lich mir sein. Und das

[ 16 ] [ 17 ] [ 18 ]

*sp*

schwör' ich dir treu - lich und gut, dass so rein ist mein kind - liches Blut,

[ 19 ] [ 20 ] [ 21 ] *sp*

als der Se - gen, den strö - mend es fleht, als hie - nie - den mein letz - tes Ge -

[ 22 ] [ 23 ] [ 24 ] [ 25 ]

bet! Ob die Jung - - - - - fran Je - ru - - - - - sa - - - - - lem's

[ 26 ] [ 27 ] [ 28 ]

R. S. 143.

klagt, sei der Rich- - - ter, der

Held nicht ver-zagt! Der Tri-umph kam durch

mich euch her-bei, und mein

Va- - - ter, die Hei- - - math sind frei!

Wenn das Blut, das du gabst, ist ent-wallt,

*dimin.* *p*

[29] [30] [31] [32] [33] [34] [35] [36] [37] [38] [39] [40] [41] [42] [43] [44] [45]

die du lieb - - - fest, die Stim - - - me ver -

*cresc.*

[46] [47] [48]

halt, denk?

[49] [50] [51]

wei - - - er, die Ruhm dir er - warb, und ver -

[52] [53] [54]

giss nicht, dass lä - - - chelnd ich starb!

[55] [56] [57]

[58] [59] [60] [61]

R. S. 143.

The last two lines of Byron's poem speak to the memory of the daughter.

Let my memory still be thy pride,  
And forget not I smiled as I died.

C-major harmonies turn to C-dominant seventh harmonies in m. 49. From F-minor (m. 51-52) to the Neapolitan (third beat of m. 52) to G-dominant seventh, one hears the harmonies leading back to the tonic note in the vocal line on the first beat of m. 57 and, finally, back to the tonic (C-minor) in the piano part on the downbeat of m. 59. The voice of Jephthah's daughter resolves in death on the downbeat of m. 57 and her memory and joyful sacrifice is accepted by the downbeat of m. 59.

### Conclusions

The themes of redemption, honor, commitment, obedience, and sacrifice that Schumann heard in Byron's words and learned from Byron's life resonated for him and his audiences after 1848. Schumann realized his own political voice and found a way to satisfy the need to search for answers through the words of Byron, as well as those of Goethe, Fallersleben, Lenau, Schiller, and Mary Stuart—poets of different nationalities and with significantly different experiences. Schumann brought their voices together in a political context in songs that he composed after 1848 for audiences whose lives had changed drastically after the mid-nineteenth century revolutions.

Schumann recognized music's power to convey important ideas he had about the current events of his and his audiences' lives. In his final review for the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (1853) Schumann announced the arrival of Johannes Brahms on the musical scene. He welcomed Brahms in this review and wrote that



Seine Mitgenossen begrüßen ihn bei seinem ersten Gang durch die Welt, wo seiner vielleicht Wunden warten werden, aber auch Lorbeeren und Palmen; wir heißen ihn willkommen als starken Streiter.

(His comrades greet him on his first entrance into the world, where there await him wounds, perhaps, but also palms and laurels; we welcome him as a valiant warrior.)<sup>31</sup>

In the same review, which included several examples of political words and phrases like the above quotation, he wrote about Brahms's songs:

...Lieder, deren Poesie man, ohne die Worte zu kennen, verstehen würde, obwohl eine tiefe Gesangsmelodie sich durch alle hindurchzieht . . .

(...lieder, whose poetry one could understand without knowing the words, although a deep vocal melody ran through them all...)<sup>32</sup>

Schumann appreciated what Brahms's songs conveyed, because he believed that his own songs—especially the ones composed after 1848—were ones “whose poetry one could understand without knowing the words.” The poetry of political thought and ideas taken from the great minds of Schumann's past and present spoke to his own sensibilities. His hope, through setting the words of Goethe, Fallersleben, Lenau, Mary Stuart, and Byron, was that his late songs would convey his ideas in a way that would shape the future.

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<sup>31</sup> “Neue Bahnen,” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 39 (1853), p. 186. Trans. Found in Oliver Strunk, editor, *Source Readings in Music History* (New York and London: Norton, 1998), 1158.

<sup>32</sup> “Neue Bahnen,” p. 185. Trans. Strunk, 1157.

## CHAPTER 3

### SCHUMANN THE STORYTELLER

One of the most fundamental ways that one human being interacts with another is to exchange experiences. The storyteller turns this kind of exchange into an art form. According to Walter Benjamin's (1892-1940) important essay, "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov," there are two kinds of stories. First, there are stories from other lands full of fantasy. Second, there are stories that are locally inspired.<sup>1</sup> Storytellers may relay experiences from fantasy (their imagination) or experiences based on fact. The story is set in the past, contains a message that is easily understood, and inspires thought and discussion. A good story is also compact and memorable and easily integrated in the listener's own experience. The nature of a good story is that it inspires retelling.<sup>2</sup>

Storytellers are translators. They interpret events according to their own values and experiences. Therefore, parts of the storytellers are in the stories they tell. In turn, when their stories are retold, they incorporate the new storyteller's experiences. Through various translations, any given story may change in small or large degrees. The changing degrees of a story are not as important as the storyteller's goal to preserve memory—a shared memory between the storyteller and his audience. This shared memory creates a communicative bond that becomes more important than the actual story itself.

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<sup>1</sup> See Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 83-110.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Benjamin believed that the true art of storytelling had all but died at the time he wrote his essay about Leskov. He believed that the oral tradition was being replaced by the popularity of the novel. See especially pp. 83-88.

The actual story itself is called a folk tale. A folk tale was a story that was told orally and it was not until the seventeenth century, when many of these stories were written down, that the fairy tale was born.<sup>3</sup> The folk tale was told by members of the folk (the lower classes) to work through the frustrations of their daily lives. These tales presented an alternative life that was more pleasant than what they experienced day-to-day. The folk tale was the storyteller's perception of the present and desire for the future.<sup>4</sup> To draw their audiences in, storytellers began their stories with a problem with which their audience could easily identify. Through the course of the story, the problem was resolved and the audience felt closure to the situation in the story that they could not have necessarily enjoyed in their day-to-day lives.

The conflict and resolution presented in folk tales represented two different things in the storyteller's mind. First, in presenting conflict, the storyteller presented what was real to him and his audience. In the presentation of the resolution to this conflict, the storyteller showed aspects of fantasy and desire. In this way, the storyteller exercised his and his audience's imagination. These tales became a way to escape, certainly, the day-to-day conflicts and, perhaps, injustices that filled their lives. But, at the same time, the tales were a way for the common folk to reconsider and articulate their desire for

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<sup>3</sup> See Jack Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1979) especially Chapter 1 ("Once There Was a Time: An Introduction to the History and Ideology of Folk and Fairy Tales") pp. 1-22 and Chapter 2 ("Might Makes Right—The Politics of Folk and Fairy Tales") pp. 23-46. Also Graham Anderson, *Fairytale in the Ancient World* (London: Routledge, 2000); William Bascom, "The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives," *Journal of American Folklore* 78 (1965): 3-20; Linda Dégh, "Folk Narrative" in *Folklore and Folklife*, ed. Richard Dorson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972): 53-84.

<sup>4</sup> See *Soziale Ordnungen im Spiegel der Märchen*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1976-77).

overall improvement.<sup>5</sup>

During the time of the French Revolution, many members of the upper classes viewed the folk tale with suspicion. Artists, however, began to embrace them especially in the German-speaking states. When Mozart, for instance, composed *Die Zauberflöte*, he believed the folk tale was part of Germany's national heritage. Johann Gottfried Herder, whose work was discussed in detail in Chapter 2, argued that the folk tale was a way to create unity among German speakers. Like Mozart and Herder, artists during this time realized the value of the folk and fairy tale. It was not just of value to the lower classes or for home entertainment or for children. Instead, these tales contained important meaning that reached beyond these superficial boundaries.<sup>6</sup>

### Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

By the early nineteenth century, the preservation of folk tales in a written form, which, up to that point, were kept alive in an oral context only, became important. One of the first and most important collections that sought to preserve this oral tradition was the first edition of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Nursery and Household Tales) published in two volumes in 1812 and 1815. Wilhelm, who wrote the prefaces to the first two editions, argued that his and Jacob's intention was to preserve the past—a past that was pure, basic, and celebrated the act of being real. In the preface to the first edition, he argued that the telling of tales was a tradition that was

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<sup>5</sup> See Mary Beth Stein, "Folklore and Fairy Tales" in *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales*, ed. Jack Zipes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 165-70; Richard M. Dorson, "Foreword," *Folktales of Germany*, ed. Kurt Ranke (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966): x-xxv.

<sup>6</sup> See Christa Bürger, "Die soziale Funktion volkstümlicher Erzählformen—Sage und Märchen," *Projekt Deutschunterricht 1*, ed. Heinz Ide (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1971): 26-56; Wilfried Gottschalch's review of Dieter Richter and Johannes Merkel's *Märchen, Phantasie und soziales Lernen* (Berlin: Basis, 1974), "Kinderunterhaltung: Phantasie und Märchen," *Ästhetik und Kommunikation* 20 (June 1975): 85-7.

being lost. He wrote that when tales were told, storytellers did not think about their words as poetry or not—they simply told their stories. Their words became an art form without the storytellers realizing it. A story was loved because of the certain way it was told. The listener did not wonder why. The storyteller was most successful with audiences who were not influenced too much by the problems, prejudices, and anxieties of the outside world. These stories brought pleasure to their listeners. These stories also moved and instructed.<sup>7</sup> Wilhelm Grimm supported the preservation of the folktale in this preface. More importantly, however, he emphasized the preservation of the tradition of telling a tale. For the Grimm brothers, the tales that they collected were important because they represented a side of life that was simple and pure and that inspired the imagination. The folktale was something that could be enjoyed without qualitative judgment. Critical to this enjoyment was the storyteller himself, who moved, instructed, and inspired his audience.

The Grimm brothers spent six years collecting stories and claimed to respect what they termed as *Volks poesie*. In the first edition, Wilhelm argued that they chose to stay as true to the actual oral folktale as possible. While in the second edition, the stories were less authentic, the brothers tried to stay true to the spirit of these tales. Even though the language became more literary and the stories were made more appropriate for children in subsequent editions, the Grimm's original purpose in collecting and recording these stories was significant.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix C of Maria Tatar, *The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales* expanded second edition (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1987), 253-54.

<sup>8</sup> See Maria Tatar, *The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003) especially Appendix C in which Tatar translates the prefaces to the First and Second Editions of the *Nursery and Household Tales* (pp. 251-270); Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment. The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Knopf, 1976); Bettelheim's "A

The title of the Grimm's collection speaks to their intention to reach a diverse audience. They realized that both children and adults would enjoy these stories. Wilhelm captured the idea of this universal appeal when he wrote about the title of the collection, that its poetry may be enjoyed by everyone and passed on from generation to generation.<sup>9</sup> The qualities of the folk tales found in the Grimm's collection appealed to both children and adults, because heroes were rewarded and villains were punished. Family conflict was resolved in a way that was fair. The text inspired sympathy for the least favored, and the outcome of the stories became predictable as well as enjoyable.

The Grimms recognized that successful storytellers knew their audiences and were able to manipulate their stories so that they appealed to their specific listeners. The Grimms realized how they needed to manipulate the stories that they had heard, in order to translate an oral version to one that was written. Nuances may have been lost in the retelling of a story when it was written down. Eventually, through the publication of later editions of the *Nursery and Household Tales*, the Grimms argued that they wrote more for children than for adults. When a story was written down, it lost its content changeability. The Grimms' collection of stories is not as important for what it is as to the idea of what it represents.<sup>10</sup>

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Return to the Land of Fairies." In *The New York Times* Section 2 (July 12, 1987): 33. It should be noted that Bettelheim's reputation is varied—Maria Tatar calls him "the most eloquent spokesman for psychological readings of fairy tales" while Jack Zipes calls him a "phony and a liar." In any case, Bettelheim's research provides valuable insight into possible hidden meanings in fairytales.

<sup>9</sup> See Wilhelm Grimm, "Über das Wesen der Märchen," in *Kleinere Schriften*, ed. Gustav Hinrichs (Berlin: Ferd. Dümmler, 1881), vol. 1, p. 333.

<sup>10</sup> See Tatar, "Sex and Violence: The Hard Core of Fairy Tales," pp. 3-38 in *The Hard Facts*; Linda Dégh, *Folktales and Society: Story-Telling in a Hungarian Peasant Community*, trans. Emily M. Schossberger (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969); Max Lüthi, "Goal-Oriented in Story-telling," in *Folklore Today*, ed. Linda Dégh, Henry Glassie, and Felix Oinas (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), pp. 357-68.

## Jacob Burckhardt

Another great thinker, in addition to Walter Benjamin and the Grimm Brothers, who shaped the way stories from the past were viewed by those who believed in the power of the folktale, was Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897). Burckhardt studied at the *Historisches Seminar* in Berlin from 1839 to 1842, and one of his teachers was Jacob Grimm. Before his tenure in Berlin, Burckhardt studied theology at the University of Basel (1835-38). Theologians at the time debated David Friedrich Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, which argued that the Gospels were not fact, but stories (myths) based on fact to teach certain aspects of religion. Strauss's argument, that parts of the bible should not be taken literally, was a popular topic during this time, and by the end of his time in Basel Burckhardt would write to a friend that he believed even that the story of the birth of Christ was a myth.<sup>11</sup> More generally, during this time Burckhardt began to question his religious beliefs and so-called truths that his father had taught him. And, more importantly, Burckhardt began to question his entire view of history and its relationship to his own present. Ultimately, these developments led Burckhardt away from an exclusive study of theology and toward a study and understanding of general history, art, and culture, and they compelled him to attempt to reconcile the issues of written history and myth (stories). The goal of considering history, he would ultimately argue, was not necessarily to seek truth in the material that he read and heard, but to discover meaning in that material. What, he asked himself, could he learn from the very existence of this material.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> David Friedrich Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, trans. G. Eliot (London: S.C.M., 1973), 87.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Mali, *Mythistory: The Making of Modern Historiography* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003). Especially Chapter 3, "Jacob Burckhardt: Mythistorian," 91-132.

After an inspiring seminar on Tacitus's *Germania*, taught by Jacob Grimm, Burckhardt began to solidify his ideas on the close relationship between the present and the past. He also began to view history as poetry rather than pure fact.<sup>13</sup> Burckhardt understood his own present by reconciling the stories, myths, and supposed truths of history. He believed that by understanding his own culture in this way, he would contribute to a renaissance of thinking that would contribute to the changes needed, especially during the mid-nineteenth century. By 1846, Burckhardt dedicated his life to teaching *Kulturgeschichte* (Cultural History) and saw the stories of the past as poetry—not necessarily as fact. He sought meaning instead of blind knowledge. In his *Reflections on History*, Burckhardt argued that the present inherits the past by default—either consciously or unconsciously—and, therefore, cultures experience renaissances whether they plan to or not.<sup>14</sup> The cultural renaissance that Burckhardt believed could take place was similar to the one that Robert Schumann, the storyteller, suggested in the stories he told in his late song cycles.

#### Schumann: “Deinem alten Märchenerzähler”<sup>15</sup>

Schumann's love for literature and his abilities as a writer caused him to be a natural storyteller in the music that he composed with and without text. Table 3.1 shows a selection of examples of pieces that reveal Schumann the storyteller.

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<sup>13</sup> These ideas were expressed in a letter from Burckhardt to Karl Fresenius, 9 June 1842. See *The Letters of Jacob Burckhardt*, 73-74; Mali, p. 99.

<sup>14</sup> Jacob Burckhardt, *Reflections on History*, trans. M. D. Hottinger (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1979), 105.

<sup>15</sup> A phrase that Schumann wrote in a letter to Clara on June 9, 1839, describing himself literally as “your old teller of fairy tales.” See Clara and Robert Schumann. *Briefwechsel: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, 2 vols., ed. Eva Weissweiler (Frankfurt: Stroemfeld/Roter Stern, 1984) p. 558.



Table 3.1. Music that Features Schumann the Storyteller<sup>16</sup>

Title	Opus Number	Year
<i>Carnaval</i>	9	1834-5
<i>Kreisleriana</i>	16	1838
Fantasie	17	1836-38
<i>Das Paradies und die Peri</i>	50	1843
<i>Szenen aus Goethes Faust</i>	woo3	1844-53
Piano Trio in F Major	80	1847
<i>Genoveva</i>	81	1847-48
<i>Der Rose Pilgerfahrt</i>	112	1851
Märchenbilder for Viola and Piano	113	1851
<i>Manfred</i>	115	1848-49
<i>Der Königssohn</i>	116	1851
Märchenerzählungen for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano	132	1853
<i>Des Sängers Fluch</i>	139	1852
<i>Vom Pagen und der Königstochter</i>	140	1852
<i>Das Glück von Edenhall</i>	143	1853

As Table 3.1 shows, Schumann's storytelling abilities were not limited by genre. What is striking about this list is that his storytelling persona was most prominent in works that he composed after 1845.

One of the first figures to identify Schumann as a storyteller in print was Adolf Schubring (1817-93). He wrote a series of articles during the 1860s, published in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, that made a case for the individuality of Schumann's artistic

<sup>16</sup> Many of the pieces contained in this list are obvious stories. Some, however, are not. The Fantasie, Op. 17, for instance, contained biographical references to Schumann's and Clara's tumultuous summer of 1836, an interplay between Florestan and Eusebius, and an allusion to Beethoven's *An die Ferne Geliebte* in the coda of the first movement. In the Piano Trio in F major, Op. 80, Schumann created pastness with archaic elements, such as canons throughout. The opening movement quoted "Dein Bildnis wunderselig" from the Eichendorff *Liederkreis*, Op. 39, which was about lost love, and Op. 80 contains an allusion to Mendelssohn's D minor Trio, Op. 49. In both Op. 17 and Op. 80, Schumann's inclusion of different extramusical elements creates a real dialogue among the elements that, in kind, tells a story throughout the work. See John Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, pp. 151-54, 325-28.

contribution.<sup>17</sup> Schubring separated Schumann from the so-called conservative camp that scholars at the time identified with Mendelssohn and from the so-called progressive tendencies that late-nineteenth-century historians identified with Liszt and Wagner.

Schubring called his series *Schumanniana*.<sup>18</sup>

In the fourth article in the series, Schubring identified three important epochs in music history: architectonic, plastic, and painterly. Each epoch was further divided into three parts: epic, dramatic, and lyric taken from Aristotle's division of poetry.<sup>19</sup> As Figure 3.1 shows, Schubring argued that Schumann's music had begun the first phase of the new painterly epoch.

Schubring argued that

So bedeutend nun Schumann in seinen mit romantischem Zauber durchdufteten lyrischen Werken ist, so ist doch sein Gipfelpunkt im Epischen zu finden, nicht in dem überlebten religiösen Epos, sondern im modern romantischen, welches in der Romanze, Ballade, Legende, Novelle, im Romane und Märchen die entsprechende Form gefunden hat.

(As important as Schumann is in his lyric works, so fragrant with romantic magic, he is at his greatest in his epic works—not the effete religious epic but the modern, romantic one, which has found its proper form in the romance, ballade, legend, novella, novel, and *Märchen*.)<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 52 no. 24 (1860), 210-211; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 53 no. 4 (1860), 29-30; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 54 no. 8 (1861), 69-70; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 54 no. 23 (1861), 197-8, 205-6, 213-14; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 55 no. 7 (1861), 53-55; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 55 no. 18 (1861), 153-6, 165-7; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 55 no. 25 (1861), 217-19, 225-7; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 56 no. 3 (1862), 17-19; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 56 no. 12 (1862) 92-6, 101-4, 109-12, 117-19; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 57 no. 2 (1862), 13-14; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 59 no. 23 (1863) 193-6.

<sup>18</sup> See the introductory remarks before Adolf Schubring, "Schumanniana No. 4: The Present Musical Epoch and Robert Schumann's Position in Musical History (1861)" trans. John Michael Cooper in *Schumann and his World* ed. R. Larry Todd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 362-374. For the original, see "Die gegenwärtige Musikepoche und Robert Schumann's Stellung in der Musikgeschichte," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 54 (1861): 197-98, 205-6, 213-14.

<sup>19</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*. *Introduction to Aristotle*, Trans. Ingram Bywater. Ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library, 1947).

<sup>20</sup> Adolf Schubring, "Schumanniana Nr. 4," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 54 no. 25 (1861), 213, trans. Cooper, 371.

Figure 3.1 Adolf Schubring's Epochs in Music History

	ARCHITECTONIC Rhythm, measured tones, the triad, canon fugue, church modes, motet, oratorio, beginnings of opera, dances (suites), chorale	PLASTIC Melody and harmony is more free, seventh chord, alternativo, variations, sonata, quartet, symphony	PAINTERLY Chromaticism, enharmonicism, ninth chords, eleventh chords, variety in instrumentation, program music, music connected to ethics
Epic	Palestrina, Senfl, Schütz	J.S. Bach	Robert Schumann
Dramatic		Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven	
Lyric	J. S. Bach	Schubert, Carl Maria von Weber, Spohr	



Although Schubring's evaluation of Schumann is based, for the most part, on Schumann's early works, his ideas give the modern reader of the whole Schumann, who exercised various personae throughout his compositional life, a different way to think about all of his works. One of the things that Schubring did not articulate in this particular article, however, is that Schumann the storyteller was inspired poetically by a member of the previous epoch: Franz Schubert (1797-1828).

Specifically, Schumann admired Schubert's musical ability to remember. Schumann's ability to "look and listen back"<sup>21</sup> in his own compositions and his ability to tell a story by controlling musical time were qualities that he may have learned from his study of the works of Schubert in the 1830s. On December 14, 1838, Schumann reviewed Schubert's Impromptus, D. 935, which were posthumously published a year

<sup>21</sup> Theodor Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmond Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, trans. Of *Mahler: Eine musikalische Physiognomik*, [1971]), p. 21.

later as Op. 142. Schumann, who heard the first, second, and fourth Impromptus as three parts of a larger work (he dismissed the third), wrote,

So spiele man denn die zwei ersten Impromptus hinter einander, schliesse ihnen, um lebhaft zu enden, das vierte an, und man hat, wenn auch keine vollständige Sonate, so eine schöne Erinnerung an ihn mehr.

(If one plays the first two Impromptus in succession and joins them to the fourth one, in order to make a lively close, the result may not be a complete sonata, but at least we will have one more beautiful memory [Erinnerung] of Schubert.)<sup>22</sup>

This sentence may reveal Schumann's admiration for Schubert's ability to create musical memory.<sup>23</sup>

Schubert's Impromptus were a generic oddity at the time, because they did not fit the mold of the typical piano character piece, nor did they follow the criteria for the piano sonata. Schumann seemed to admire how Schubert ignored the expectations of this particular genre, but he also admired the reminiscent quality of the music itself and Schubert's adeptness in recalling earlier sections (and perhaps a pastness in generic terms) with phrase quality, key relationships, and the overall structure of individual impromptus. In a word, Schumann evidently felt that Schubert's ability to remember musically widened the generic possibilities of the piano character piece. Schumann would incorporate this dimension into his own music in numerous textured works written after 1848.<sup>24</sup>

Schumann's storytelling abilities in music with text after 1848 were most obvious in his choral part-songs, choral-orchestral ballades, and song cycles (Table 3.2).

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<sup>22</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 9 (1838): pp. 192-93. Trans. and quoted in Daverio's *Crossing Paths*, p. 50.

<sup>23</sup> John Daverio, "The Gestus of Remembering: Schumann's Critique of Schubert's Impromptus, D. 935," in *Crossing Paths*, pp. 47-64.

<sup>24</sup> For a helpful discussion of Schumann's musical memory in *Davidsbündlertänze*, Op. 6, see Berthold Hoeckner, "Schumann and Romantic Distance," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50/1 (1997): 55-132.

Table 3.2. Post-1848 Texted Music that Shows Schumann the Storyteller

Title	Type
<i>Romanzen und Balladen</i> , Op. 67 <i>Der König von Thule, Ungewitter, John Anderson</i> (first setting)	Choral Part-Songs
<i>Romanzen und Balladen</i> , Op., 75 <i>Der Rekrut, Vom verwundeten Knabe</i>	Choral Part-Songs
<i>Romanzen und Balladen</i> , Op. 145 <i>John Anderson</i> (second setting)	Choral Part-Songs
<i>Romanzen und Balladen</i> , Op. 146 <i>Der Traum</i>	Choral Part-Songs
<i>Der Königssohn</i> , Op. 116	Choral-Orchestral Ballade
<i>Des Sängers Fluch</i> , Op. 139	Choral-Orchestral Ballade
<i>Vom Pagen und der Königstochter</i> , Op. 140	Choral-Orchestral Ballade
<i>Das Glück von Edenhall</i> , Op. 143	Choral-Orchestral Ballade
<i>Lieder-Album für die Jugend</i> , Op. 79	Song Cycle
<i>Lieder und Gesänge</i> , Op. 96	Song Cycle
<i>Drei Gedichte aus den Waldliedern</i> , Op. 119	Song Cycle
<i>Zwei Balladen</i> , Op. 122	Song Cycle

Not only did Schumann find inspiration in the works of Schubert, but also he realized his storytelling voice through his study of Ossianic poetry, which first became popular among artists between the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. The source for artists during Schumann's time was translations (French, Italian, German, Spanish, Danish, Dutch, Czech, Russian, Hungarian, Greek) of James Macpherson's *The Poems of Ossian and Related Works*, which was originally published in the 1760s.<sup>25</sup> Poets and musicians who became interested in Ossianic poetry early on were

<sup>25</sup> See Howard Gaskill, *The Reception of Ossian in Europe* (London, New York: Thoemmes Continuum, 2004). Gaskill gives a list of translations in "Ossian in Europe," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 21 (1994), 644-5. He also edited *The Poems of Ossian and Related Works* (Edinburgh, 1996). Many scholars argue that Macpherson was a fraud and that he may not have stayed true to his sources—that much of what he wrote was from his own imagination. His goal, initially, however, was to preserve the oral tradition of Ossianic poetry on paper. Much like the Grimm brothers, what he wrote down was a combination of what he heard and his own imagination. His collection, in any case, was the inspiration for much art that was created during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See Gaskill, "Ossian in Europe."

Jean Paul, Herder, Goethe, Friedrich Schlegel, Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, Pushkin, Lermontov, Lamartine, Mendelssohn, Schubert, and Niels Gade.<sup>26</sup>

Schumann was especially interested in the musical works of Niels Gade, whose *Nachklänge von Ossian*, Op. 1, Schumann reviewed.<sup>27</sup> He admired Gade's music and named him as one of the chosen ones in his article "Neue Bahnen" which introduced Johannes Brahms.<sup>28</sup> Gade, whose name has been all but forgotten today, was a composer who was very well known in Leipzig after 1843. After Mendelssohn's death in 1847, he became the musical director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra. Schumann and Gade developed a close friendship and Schumann thought of Gade as a poet, a master, a gifted musician, and a good person.<sup>29</sup> About Gade's ability as an Ossianic storyteller, Schumann wrote that

Auch unsern jungen Tonkünstler erzogen die Dichter seines Vaterlandes; er kennt und liebt sie alle; die alten Mährchen und Sagen begleiteten ihn auf seinen Knabenwanderungen, und von Englands Küste ragte Ossians Riesenharfe herüber. So zeigt sich in seiner Musik, und zuerst eben in jener Ossian Ouverture, zum erstenmal ein entschieden ausgeprägter nordischer Charakter.

(Our young composer [Gade] also learned from the poets of his native land; he knows and loves them all. Old fairy tales and sagas accompanied him on his boyhood travels, and Ossian's giant harp beckoned to him from the British coast. Hence a strongly marked Nordic character emerges for the first time in his music, above all in his *Ossian* overture).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See Daverio, "Schumann's Ossianic Manner," 247-251 that also includes a list of visual artists affected by Ossianic poetry. See especially the list of musical works associated with Ossianic poetry on p. 250. Works that Schumann knew well included Mendelssohn's *Hebrides* Overture, Op. 26 and Gade's *Nachklänge von Ossian* Op. 1.

<sup>27</sup> See Anna Harwell Celenza, *The Early Works of Niels W. Gade: In Search of the Poetic* (Aldershot; Brookfield: Ashgate, 2001).

<sup>28</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 39 (1853), 185. Other names mentioned were Joseph Joachim, Albert Dietrich, Woldemar Bargiel, Robert Franz, and Stephen Heller.

<sup>29</sup> See Robert Schumann, *Briefe, Neue Folge*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., ed. Gustav Jansen (Leipzig, 1904), pp. 245, 281, and 294; John Daverio, "Schumann's Ossianic Manner," 254-259.

<sup>30</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 20 (1844), 2.

Qualities that Schumann may have learned from Gade's music became part of Schumann's storytelling voice in his choral part-songs, choral-orchestral ballades, and especially in many of the late song cycles. These qualities included a dark minor character, martial elements, and speech-like melodies. Modal harmonies, plagal endings of phrases (iv-I-V-I), and simple form (a||:ba':||) were also heard in the music that featured Schumann's storytelling voice. This music also contained straightforward phrase structure, chordal textures, and third-related tonalities (music moving to the relative minor instead of the dominant). In addition, Schumann composed harp-like textures (the harp was the instrument of choice in Ossianic poetry), used the pentatonic scale, and featured qualities of chivalry and heroism.<sup>31</sup> Many of these qualities may be found in Schumann's important collection of stories that he called *Lieder-Album für die Jugend*, Op. 79 published in 1849.

Noted for its political qualities in Chapter 2, Op. 79 was also a piece that featured Schumann the storyteller. As Table 3.3 shows, Schumann featured a variety of poets and subject matter in this song cycle.

*Table 3.3. Titles, Poets, and Keys of Op. 79*

Titles	Poets	Keys
1. Der Abendstern (The Evening Star)	Fallersleben	A major
2. Schmetterling (Butterfly)	Fallersleben	D major
3. Frühlingsbotschaft (Spring's Harbinger)	Fallersleben	G major
4. Frühlingsgruss (A Greeting to Spring)	Fallersleben	G major
5. Vom Schlaraffenland (From the Land of Plenty)	Fallersleben	C major
6. Sonntag (Sunday)	Fallersleben	F major

*(table continues)*

<sup>31</sup> Jonathan Bellman, "Aus Alten Märchen: The Chivalric Style of Schumann and Brahms," *Journal of Musicology* 13 (1995), 117-35.

Table 3.3 (continued).

Titles	Poets	Keys
7. Zigeunerliedchen (1 & 2) (Little Gypsy Song)	anon. Trans. Geibel	A minor
8. Des Knaben Berglied (Song of the Mountain Boy)	Uhland	C major
9. Mailied (May Song) (solo or optional duet)	Overbeck	G major
10. Käuzlein (Little Screech Owl) from <i>Des Knaben Wunderhorn</i>		A minor
11. Hinaus in's Freie! (Out into the open Air)	Fallersleben	F major
12. Der Sandmann (The Sandman)	Hermann Kletke	F major
13. Marienwürmchen (Ladybird) from <i>Des Knaben Wunderhorn</i>		F major
14. Die Waise (The Orphan Girl)	Fallersleben	A minor
15. Das Glück (Happiness)	Hebbel	D major
16. Weihnachtslied (Christmas Carol)	Andersen	G major
17. Die wandelnde Glocke (The Walking Bell)	Goethe	G minor
18. Frühlingslied (Spring Song)	Fallersleben	C major
19. Frühlings Ankunft (Spring's Arrival)	Fallersleben	G major
20. Die Schwalben (The Swallows) from <i>Des Knaben Wunderhorn</i>		C major
21. Kinderwacht (Guarding the Children)	anon. poem	F major
22. Des Sennen Abschied (The Alpine Herdsman's Farewell)	Schiller	C major
23. Er ist's (It's He [Spring])	Mörike	A major
24. Spinnelied (Spinning Song)		F major <sup>32</sup>
25. Des Buben Schützenlied (The Boy's Hunting Song)	Schiller	B-flat major
26. Schneeglöckchen (Snowdrops)	Rückert	E-flat major
27. Lied Lynceus des Thürmers (The Song of Lynceus, Keeper of the Watch Tower)	Goethe	B-flat major
28. Mignon/Kennst du das Land (Do you know the Land)	Goethe	G minor

Comparable to the Grimm brothers' collection, Op. 79 was Schumann's folktale collection. The cycle begins with short, harmonically simple songs (sometimes only

<sup>32</sup> This song is for three sopranos and is not included in some editions.



eight-bar strophic settings). As the cycle progresses, the songs become more and more complicated harmonically and address subject matter that is more complicated. Schumann features nature, characters (mostly children), and emotions as his subject matter (Table 3.4).

*Table 3.4. Subject Matter in Op. 79*

Nature	Characters (mostly children)	Emotions
1. The Evening Star/ Fallersleben	7. Little Gypsy Song/anon. Spanish poem trans. Geibel	15. Happiness/ Hebbel
2. Butterfly/Fallersleben	8. Song of the Mountain Boy/ Uhland	
3. Spring's Harbinger/ Fallersleben	12. The Sandman/Kletke	
4. A Greeting to Spring/ Fallersleben	14. The Orphan Girl/Fallersleben	
5. From the Land of Plenty/ Fallersleben	17. The Walking Bell /Goethe	
6. Sunday/Fallersleben	21. Guarding the Children/ anon. poem	
9. May Song/Overbeck	25. The Boy's Hunting Song/Schiller	
10. Little Screech Owl/from <i>Des Knaben Wunderhorn</i>	27. The Song of Lynceus, Keeper of the Watch Tower/Goethe	
11. Out into the open Air/ Fallersleben	28. Mignon/Do you know the Land/Goethe	
13. Ladybird/ from <i>Des Knaben Wunderhorn</i>		
16. Christmas Carol/ Andersen		
18. Spring Song/ Fallersleben		
19. Spring's Arrival/ Fallersleben		
20. The Swallows/ from <i>Des Knaben Wunderhorn</i>		
22. The Alpine Herdsman's Farewell/Schiller		
23. It's He [Spring]/Mörike		
26. Snowdrops/Rückert		

Nine songs feature characters and their different emotional states (Table 3.5).

*Table 3.5. Specific Characters and their Emotional States in Op. 79*

Character	Emotional State	Key
Little Gypsy Song, No. 1/Little Gypsy Song, No. 2	Power of a child against authority/Powerlessness of a child	A minor
Song of the Mountain Boy	Optimism of a child	C major
The Sandman	Protection of the vulnerable child	F major
The Orphan Girl	Sadness and isolation of the orphaned child	A minor
The Bell that could Walk	Lessons learned by a child	G minor
Guarding the Children	Protection of the child	F major
The Boy's Hunting Song	Power of the boy-hunter	B-flat major
The Song of Lynceus, Keeper of the Watch Tower	Optimism	B-flat major
Mignon/Do you know the Land	Homelessness of a child	G minor

One of the themes that Schumann the storyteller addresses in three of the songs from Op. 79 as well in other late song cycles is that of isolation (Figure 3.2)

*Figure 3.2. Themes of Isolation in the Late Song Cycles*

- 1849** Op. 79 no. 7 “Zigeunerliedchen” (2) (Gypsy Song)  
 Op. 79 no. 14 “Die Waise” (The Orphan Girl)  
 Op. 79 no. 28 “Mignon”  
 Op. 98a no. 6 “Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt” (He who Surrenders to Solitude)
- 1850** Op. 83 no. 3 “Der Einseidler” (The Hermit)  
 Op. 96 no. 2 “Schneeglöckchen” (Snowdrop)
- 1851** Op. 107 no. 5 “Im Wald” (In the Forest)
- 1852** Op. 135 no. 1 “Abschied von Frankreich” (Farewell to France)

When he featured the subject of isolation, Schumann sometimes composed in ways that he identified with the Ossianic music of Niels Gade. For instance, in the second Gypsy song of Op. 79 no. 7 the music is in a minor key, a simple 3/8 time signature, and is organized in three simple eight-bar phrases. Additionally, this song is strophic, has a melancholy character, a speech-like melody, and a chordal texture. This song is about a child who is sad to have been taken from her home, perhaps by the gypsies. The music accentuates the child's fear and sadness, her powerlessness, and her vulnerability to stronger forces (Ex. 3.1).

Another way that Schumann featured the subject of isolation in his late songs is by aimless harmony and text that seems to fight against the music. In "Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt" (he who surrenders to solitude), the sixth song of Op. 98a, Schumann personifies solitude so that solitude itself is a companion to the one who felt alone (the Harper). Solitude, however, is not a welcome companion, and the Harper yearns for death, so that the pain will leave him alone. As the Harper sings about his pain, he accompanies himself on the harp. Schumann composes harp-like textures throughout the song and creates a restlessness that the Harper feels, not only because he is overwhelmed with his feelings of being alone, but also because he desires a change in his emotional state. The awkward way that the text and music fight each other adds to the power of the setting in that the listener may identify with the Harper's feelings of isolation and discontent (Ex. 3.2).

In two cycles from 1851 and 1852, Schumann tells the story of characters whose loneliness and isolation are emphasized more by what they observed in their own surroundings. In Op. 107 no. 5, "Im Wald" (In the Forest), the protagonist finds himself

Ex. 3.1. "Jeden Morgen, in der Frühe" (Zigeunerliedchen), Op. 79 no. 7.

10 (38)

2.

Langsam.

Je - den Mor - gen, in der Frö - he, wenn mich weckt das Ta - ges - licht, mit - dem

Was - ser mei - ner Au - gen wasch ich dann mein An - ge - sicht. Wo die Ber - ge hoch sich thürmen an dem

Saum des Him - mels dort, aus dem Haus, dem schö - nen Garten tra - gen sie bei Nacht mich fort. Jeden Morgen, in der

Frü - he, wenn mich weckt das Ta - ges - licht, mit dem Was - ser mei - ner Au - gen wasch ich dann mein An - ge - sicht.

R. S. 134

Ex. 3.2. "Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergiebt," Op. 98a no. 6.

18

№6. „Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergiebt.“

Mit tief melancholischem Ausdruck. (♩=63.)

Harfner.

Wer sich der Ein - samkeit er - giebt, ach!

— der ist bald al - lein; ein je - der lebt, ein je - der

liebt, und lässt ihn sei - ner Pein. — Ja, lasst mich meiner Qual! und

kann ich nur ein - mal recht ein - sam sein, dann bin ich nicht al -

lein. Es schleicht ein Liebender lauschend sacht, ob seine Frenndin al.

R. S. 145.

lein. — So ü - berschleicht bei

Tag und Nacht mich Ein - sa - men die Pein, mich Ein - sa - men die

Pein, ach! werd' ich erst ein - mal ein - sam im Gra - be sein,

da lässt sie mich al - lein.

R. S. 145.

a

alone in the forest. He observes pairs of butterflies, birds, and deer playing in the forest. While he sought out comfort by his visit to the forest, he, instead, feels more alone by seeing animals of nature as they enjoy their community. Another cycle that treats isolation in this way is Schumann's last cycle from 1852 about Mary Stuart. The

first song, "Abschied von Frankreich" (farewell to France), shows Mary's involuntary exit from her homeland. Her isolation is emphasized throughout the cycle by forces that are seemingly out of her control. While she needs a sympathetic ear and ultimately her freedom from Elizabeth, the queen's silence causes Mary to seek comfort in death – death that was not her choice, but one, in the end, that she welcomes in Schumann's view.

### The Storyteller's Solution to the Problem of Isolation

In the five-song cycle *Lieder und Gesänge*, Op. 96 from 1850, Schumann focuses on the theme of isolation and his storytelling voice resonates throughout. In the first song, "Nachtlied" (Night Song), a hymn in C major that sets a poem by Goethe<sup>33</sup>, the protagonist is looking back on his life from his deathbed.<sup>34</sup> Images of nature, the hills, the treetops, and birds accompany the emotions of peace, stillness, and quiet. The text and music present a message of patience. Just like the forces of nature, the hero of the story, who is about to die, will be able to rest (die) soon as well.

In this song, a disparity between the poetic text and Schumann's music emphasizes the role of the storyteller as interpreter. Whereas Goethe's words paint a beautiful picture of death as the natural outcome and natural end to the journey of life, Schumann's music hints at a different story. In Goethe's text death is welcomed, accepted and even celebrated as a natural ending to a life well lived. The end of life is a natural progression and the positive feelings that the protagonist has toward this end

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<sup>33</sup> From 1827, Goethe's "Nachtlied" may be found in *Werke, Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand*, Band 1.

<sup>34</sup> I use "his" in the description, even though the gender of the protagonist is not altogether clear. Songs 1, 4, and 5 are not gender-specific, Song 2's snowflake is female, and Song 3 is about the voice of a woman (perhaps the lover of the protagonist).

are not a result of any told struggle during life. By contrast, Schumann creates four musical events in the vocal line (within the 32-measure song) that tell a different story. These four instances directly oppose the hymn-like accompaniment, which is smooth, stepwise, and creates an atmosphere of calm and serenity.

The four events, which are all rather startling to the ear, feature two wide leaps and two abrupt changes in range (Ex. 3.3). From the third beat of m. 10 to the first beat of m. 11, the vocal line leaps a minor sixth from  $e^1$  to  $c^2$ . At the end of the song, there is a leap of a minor seventh from  $d^1$  to  $c^2$  from m. 27 to m. 28. The two abrupt changes in range occur in between these two leaps, and both range changes are heard after beats of silence from the vocal line. After the singer sings “Hauch” on an  $e^1$  in m. 14, she rests for five beats. On the fourth beat of m. 15, she enters again an octave above where the previous phrase ended. In m. 18, she ends on a  $g^1$  on the third beat. After four beats of vocal silence, she reenters on an  $f^2$ , a minor seventh above.

By creating these four startling musical events, Schumann showed that the protagonist had more to say—more than Goethe allowed in his poem. In some cases, such leaps and range changes in a mostly stepwise piece may suggest that the protagonist fought death and struggled to stay alive. This is not the case in this song. Instead, these places in the music suggest that the protagonist tells his story before he dies. Schumann presents a vocal line that sometimes cries out against the accompaniment to show this desire to tell a story, but he creates visual and musical closes to this life nonetheless.



Ex. 3.3. "Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh'" (Nachtlied), Op. 96 no. 1.

2 (136)

Schumann's Werke.

**Lieder und Gesänge**  
für eine Singstimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte  
von  
**ROBERT SCHUMANN.**  
Op. 96.

Serie 13. N<sup>o</sup> 26.

**Nachtlied.**

(J. W. v. Goethe.)

N<sup>o</sup> 1.

Sehr langsam. (M. M. ♩ = 96)

Componirt 1850.

Ue - ber al - len Gi - pfeln ist Ruh',  
in al - len Wi - pfeln spü - rest du kaum ei - nen Hauch. Die Vög - lein  
schweigen im Wal - de. War - te nur, bal - de  
ru - hest du auch, ru - hest du auch!

stich und Druck von Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig.  
R. S. 144.  
Ausgegeben 1887.

The visual and musical closes in this song occur between mm. 11-13, 19-20, 21-22, and 29-32. By composing the outer lines of the piano accompaniment in contrary motion, with the top line descending and the bottom line ascending, Schumann illustrates the first chapter (or maybe the last chapter and one where the main character is looking back on a life) of the story he tells in Op. 96 with visual decrescendos. Schumann places these visual decrescendos in close proximity to the abrupt leaps and changes in range heard from the vocalist as a way to, perhaps, offset the extreme nature of these changes. The profound affect of the visual decrescendos sets up Schumann's five-chapter story as one that is a process of looking back on a life. The audience knows that the protagonist is dying but becomes interested in the story that the life will tell.

As in any good story, a problem is presented and a solution is offered. As found in many of the late songs already discussed, the problem in this story is one of isolation and aloneness. The protagonist appears in Op. 96 no. 2, "Schneeglöckchen," as a snowflake. Forces out of its control determine the fate of the snowflake. When it realizes this, the musical texture completely changes from moving eighth notes to chords in mm. 101-121. The changing seasons, a natural progression of life, occur whether the characters in the story want it to or not. The snowdrop has to adjust to this change in order to survive. Having to do this causes the snowflake feel alone and isolated, which is accentuated in m. 33 when the music changes from 3/4 to 2/4.

When the texture changes at the end of the song from running eighth notes to hymn-like chords, Schumann further accentuates the snowflake's feelings of isolation

and also reminds the listener of the textures of the first song in the cycle. At the end, the snowflake asks important questions:

Wob ihn wohl um das weisse Kleid des Winters rauhe Hand?

Wo komm' ich her? Wo geh' ich hin? Wo ist mein Vaterland?

(Was it woven by Winter's rough hand around the white cloak? From where do I come? Where am I bound? Where is my fatherland?)

Like Mignon and the Harper in Op. 98a, Elisabeth Kulmann in Op. 104, the wanderer in the forest in Op. 107, and Mary Stuart in Op. 135, the snowflake is completely alone. She observes the green color of spring that begins to consume winter's cloak. She understands that a major change is about to happen. Her place among the many changes, however, is still a mystery. Where does she go? What is her role? How will she make herself belong? Schumann's five-chapter story as one that is a process of looking back on a life. The audience knows that the protagonist is dying but becomes interested in the story that the life will tell.

As in any good story, a problem is presented and a solution is offered. As found in many of the late songs already discussed, the problem in this story is one of isolation and aloneness. The protagonist appears in Op. 96 no. 2, "Schneeglöckchen," as a snowflake. Forces out of its control determine the fate of the snowflake. When it realizes this, the musical texture completely changes from moving eighth notes to chords in mm. 101-121. The changing seasons, a natural progression of life, occur whether the characters in the story want it to or not. The snowdrop has to adjust to this change in order to survive. Having to do this causes the snowflake feel alone and isolated, which is accentuated in m. 33 when the music changes from 3/4 to 2/4.

When the texture changes at the end of the song from running eighth notes to hymn-like chords, Schumann further accentuates the snowflake's feelings of isolation

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Wob ihn wohl um das weisse Kleid des Winters rauhe Hand?

Wo komm' ich her? Wo geh' ich hin? Wo ist mein Vaterland?

(Was it woven by Winter's rough hand around the white cloak? From where do I come? Where am I bound? Where is my fatherland?)

Like Mignon and the Harper in Op. 98a, Elisabeth Kulmann in Op. 104, the wanderer in the forest in Op. 107, and Mary Stuart in Op. 135, the snowflake is completely alone.

She observes the green color of spring that begins to consume winter's cloak. She understands that a major change is about to happen. Her place among the many changes, however, is still a mystery. Where does she go? What is her role? How will she make herself belong?

Ihre Stimme (Her Voice), the third song in the cycle, begins to answer these questions, and Schumann begins to suggest a solution. The solution is not fully understood until the fourth song, but the third song addresses the important idea of communication. The text of Song 3, written by August Graf von Platen (1796-1835), is as follows:

Lass tief in dir mich lesen,  
Verhehl' auch dies mir nicht,  
Was für ein Zauberwesen  
Aus deiner Stimme spricht!

So viele Worte dringen  
Ans Ohr uns ohne Plan  
Und während sie verklingen,  
Ist alles abgetan!

Doch drängt auch nur von ferne  
Dein Ton zu mir sich her,  
Belausch' ich ihn so gerne,  
Vergess' ich ihn so schwer.

Ich bebe dann, entglimme  
Von allzurascher Glut:  
Mein Herz und deine Stimme  
Versteh'n sich gar zu gut!

(Let me read the truth deep within you; do not conceal from me what magic being speaks from your voice./ So many words reach our ears to no purpose; they are forgotten even before they die away./ But your tones can reach my ear even from afar; I delight to hear them, I never forget their least murmur./ Then I tremble, kindled with sudden fire; my heart and your voice understand each other only too well.)

Schumann repeated the last two lines of the final stanza at the end of his setting and, by doing so, emphasized the strong bond of communication and connection.

When he chose to place this song after the one that featured the snowflake who was devastated by feelings of isolation and loneliness, Schumann offers comfort. It is not just what is said that is important, however. It is the “tones” that speak most clearly.

This song juxtaposes words and tones. Words are often forgotten soon after they are spoken. However, tones provide a special kind of connection and communication.

“Gesungen” (Sung), Song 4, makes clear the solution to the problem of isolation and loneliness presented at the beginning of the cycle. It is a text by Friedrich Wilhelm Traugott Schöppf (1826-1916) who wrote under the name of Wilfried von der Neun. The poem presents images of nature that include the rain, tree branches, a storm, birds, and the love of God. Amidst all of these forces of nature and the fighting of wars, the power of song is able to defeat or at least break through the chaos of the outside world.

The final song of the cycle brings the audience back to the present of the story, where the protagonist is on his deathbed. He has reflected on parts of his life and told his story. He has shown how to combat the problem of isolation and offered music as a solution. “Himmel und Erde” (Heaven and Earth), Song 5, also sets a text by Schöppf

and is a procession from life to death—a procession that began during Song 1 but could only continue after the story had been told. While elements of nature had been presented as forces that caused chaos at times in the other songs, Song 5 suggests that the treetops, mountain peaks, and meadow flowers are important parts of the process of life—that their figurative arms are reaching up toward heaven and helping the process of life progress.

### Widening the Generic Possibilities of the Song Cycle

Schumann was not completely straightforward with his message in many of his late works. The late songs were no exception. The reader of these texts must reach beyond the notes and words to understand meaning. The story in Op. 96 is not an obvious one. The poetry and poets are diverse as well. As in the *Lieder Album für die Jugend*, Op. 79, Schumann's choice of poets may be as significant in Op. 96 as the texts themselves.

Schumann opens the cycle with a short but powerful poem by Goethe. The second song sets a poem by an anonymous poet. The third song sets words by August Graf von Platen-Hallermünde, and the fourth and fifth songs include texts by Wilfred von der Neun, whose real name was Friedrich Wilhelm Traugott Schöpff. The first song sets words by a poet who was a literary icon, the second sets words by someone without a name, the third, fourth, and fifth songs set words by two poets who have all but been forgotten in the literature.

August Graf von Platen-Hallermünde chose a profession that did not make him happy but found his way at the end of his life. He was a soldier from a very young age.

Platen joined the cadet corps when he was ten and four years later he attended a military school. By 1814, he was a sub-lieutenant in the first infantry regiment but was not happy. He even thought about deserting. He began writing seriously in 1817 and was very well read. While he attended the University of Würzburg with permission from the army, he became friends with Jean Paul, Rückert, Jakob Grimm, and Goethe. Platen published stage plays and poetry and left Germany in 1834 forever. He settled and died in Syracuse, NY.

Schöpff, like Platen-Hallermünde, was a poet by avocation while he worked full time in another field. He was ambitious, forward thinking, and goal-oriented. He was also, apparently, Schumann's friend. Schumann, in setting two of his poems in Op. 96 and an entire cycle of six songs in Op. 89 (*Sechs Gesänge von Wilfried von der Neun*) encouraged his friend to continue writing. Like his father, Schöpff was a theologian. In 1849, he wrote Schumann, asking him to set some of his poetry and included samples from which Schumann could choose. They met twice in 1850 (May 28 and June 4 in Leipzig) and may have met a third time (August 26), according to an entry in Schumann's *Haushaltbuch*.<sup>35</sup>

As Table 3.6 shows, Schumann's story begins with the poetry of an icon known to any audience member who would have heard this cycle. In this song, the protagonist looks back. In the second song, the words are written by a nameless poet and the problem (isolation) is presented. The audience understands that the protagonist is looking back to the past. The third song, also in the past, features words by a poet who was lost for much of his life but then found his way. This song argues that voicedness

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<sup>35</sup> *Tagebuch* III/2, p. 535.

is an important quality. The fourth song was written by an ambitious poet whose profession was in the church, while his passion was in his art. The fourth song remains in the past and presents the solution to the problem of isolation. The fifth song, by the same poet as the fourth, is back in the present and looks forward to life after death.

These poets' lives tell the same story as the words Schumann chose to set. When the problem of isolation is presented in Song 2, the idea of a poet without a name or a face reiterates the isolated, lonely, homeless state of the snowflake. Likewise, we may hear Graf von Platen's voice and the importance of his voice in his real life when we hear the words about how important it is to make one's voice heard. By using the confident words of Schöpff in songs 4 and 5, one hears a voice that knows exactly what he wants and makes sure to gain access to these things. Schumann uses Schöpff's voice to offer a solution to the problem of isolation presented in this cycle.

*Table 3.6. The Poets' Stories of Op. 96*

Song 1	Song 2	Song 3	Song 4	Song 5
Goethe	Anonymous	Graf von Platen	Wilfrend von der Neun (Schöpff)	Wilfrend von der Neun (Schöpff)
Poetic icon	Nameless and faceless	Chose the wrong path in life – found his way in the end	Ambitious, forward-thinking, goal-oriented	Profession is with the church— Passion is his poetry
Protagonist looks back on his life before he dies	Problem is presented: ISOLATION	Voicedness as an important quality	Music is the solution to the problem (ISOLATION)	Back to the present – protagonist has told story – ready to die
Present	Past	Past	Past	Present
Looking back	Problem	Timeless	Solution	Looking forward



Isolation as a topic in poetry was not necessarily a negative thing. At times, the protagonist may choose to withdraw and may not feel rejected because of this choice.<sup>36</sup> In the case of the protagonist that was the subject of Schumann's story in Op. 96, however, isolation was not a desired state of being. In analyzing Schumann's story in Op. 96, one may consider four different dialogues that were taking place: the individual and his immediate culture, the individual and the world in general, the individual and his past, and the individual and his future (Table 3.7).

*Table 3.7. Four Dialogues Taking Place in Op. 96*

Individual vs. immediate culture	Individual vs. world in general	Individual vs. his own past	Individual vs. his own future
Schumann's use of song as a communicator in the home setting	Schumann's knowledge that the home was a representative of the world at large	Schumann's ability to come to terms with himself through his (early, middle, and late) songs	Schumann's desire to make the future better through music

The first and third dialogues were ones that were closely related to Jacob Burckhardt's philosophies, discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Schumann showed how the protagonist looked back on his own past and remembered his own history. He did not just reiterate his history as facts. Rather, he recounted past events and analyzed their meaning. The cycle showed how the protagonist learned from these past events. Likewise, Schumann the storyteller sought meaning in these poets' stories when he set their words in Op. 96. He decided to solve the problems of his culture's present with the words from past poets' pens. The relationship between past and

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<sup>36</sup> See Liselotte Dieckmann, "Symbols of Isolation in Some Late Nineteenth-Century Poets" in *Studies in Germanic Languages and Literatures* (St. Louis: Washington University Press, 1963), 133-148 for a discussion of the topic of isolation in late nineteenth century poetry, especially in the works of Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Proust. This discussion may also be relevant to poetry in the early nineteenth century.

present—one that Jacob Burckhardt spent much of his life developing and, according to many scholars, perfecting—was one that Schumann met directly in Op. 96.

Schumann used his symphonies and large choral works to communicate these ideas to a general, public audience. For a more specific, private audience, he communicated with his songs and his chamber music. A blur between these specific boundaries began around the mid-nineteenth century, however, and, more importantly, for Schumann, the home represented the world at large—it was just a smaller version of the world. Therefore, when he communicated with his late songs, he conveyed big, important ideas in a place (the home) that was small, protected, and safe. Like Schubert with his Impromptus that Schumann had reviewed years before, Schumann began to ignore the generic expectations of the song cycle and, like Schubert with the piano character piece, Schumann widened the generic possibilities of this genre.

There was also a change in Schumann as a person that manifested itself in his late songs. Whereas the middle-period songs were about love, self, and a young man finding himself, the late-period songs showed an awareness of family, community, and the world in general. While this is natural human development, it is important in Schumann's late works because this shift from a focus on himself to a focus on the world explains, in part, why his late songs were so different in style and content from his early or middle songs.<sup>37</sup>

The song cycle was the perfect venue to express his ideas and give solutions to real problems. The song cycle in this way was much like the folk tale. It was short and accessible. In Schumann's musical stories he presented a problem and offered a

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<sup>37</sup> See Michael P. Steinberg, "Schumann's Homelessness" in *Schumann and his World* ed. R. Larry Todd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 47-79.

solution, as was the case with the folk tale. The exchange of experience could happen in the most intimate way, as a pianist and singer shared a cycle with a small audience in the home. Wilhelm Grimm believed “the custom of telling tales is ever on the wane.” Perhaps Schumann wanted to keep the tradition alive through his songs. By telling his stories through his songs, Schumann wanted to “see that the custom persist[ed]” in a place, as Grimm wrote, “where one finds a warm receptivity to poetry or where there are imaginations not yet warped by the perversities of life.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> In Wilhelm Grimm’s preface to the first edition of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### SCHUMANN'S PORTRAYAL OF THE "FEMALE VOICE"

The first edition of Robert Schumann's *Sieben Lieder*, Op. 104, a cycle of seven songs for soprano and piano, was published by Friedrich Kistner (Leipzig) in October, 1851.<sup>1</sup> Op. 104 sets texts by Elisabeth Kulmann (1808-1825), who spent her short, yet remarkable life in St. Petersburg. Karl Friedrich von Großheinrich, a former teacher who published the first edition of her complete works in 1835, ten years after her death, introduced Schumann to Kulmann's poetry in 1851. What is most striking about Op. 104 is that Schumann was not only attracted to Kulmann's poetry, but also so fascinated with her life that he chose to include epigraphic inscriptions before, among, and after the seven songs of the cycle. In fact, Schumann made an important statement with Op. 104, that treats not only the words composed by the poet, but also considers aspects of her life as an artistic endeavor. In this cycle, Schumann put into practice the important lessons he learned from Jean Paul so many years earlier about the important bond he believed existed between art and life.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter proposes that Schumann's musical and textual presentations of Kulmann's poetry in Op. 104 represent a revealing artistic statement—not musically insignificant engagements with sub-standard texts, as some commentators have

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<sup>1</sup> At the same time, Kistner published Schumann's *Mädchenlieder*, Op. 103. This opus also sets texts by Elisabeth Kulmann and is a cycle of four songs for two sopranos and piano. These duets, however, are outside the scope of this project, which focuses on music for soloist and piano.

<sup>2</sup> Scholars have generally neglected these two cycles, asserting that their poetic texts were sub-standard for Op. 103 and Op. 104. See Ulrich Mahlert, "Zu Schumanns Liedern nach Gedichten von Elisabeth Kulmann, Op. 104." *Schumann Forschungen: Schumann in Düsseldorf*. (1988): 119-140. Mahlert acknowledges and argues with issues regarding the negative reception of Op. 104 and identifies several reasons why the poetry, poet, and subject matter may have been attractive to Schumann. At the end of the article, Mahlert argues that Kulmann, as poet, speaks on a certain level through the poetry but that the importance of her existence and her message was *understood* through Schumann's musical and poetic interpretation of her words.

suggested. First, this section explores the textual dedication and epigraphs that Schumann included before and after each song. These textual inserts, which were rare in Schumann's song cycles, served as significant components in the message that Schumann conveyed to his audiences and related substantively to the opus's musical cyclicity. They also offer important insights into Schumann's views on Kulmann's own life as a poetic statement. Schumann's message reveals two specific personae that evolve in many of his late works. The idea of a composer who adopts various personae through his art is closely related to the concept of voicedness discussed in Chapter 1. It could even be viewed as a further development of a certain voice that a composer utilized in his or her art to convey a specific meaning. The two personae that were most highly developed in Schumann's late works were that of "communicator" and, especially, that of "pedagogue." These personae were audience-specific, which makes their existence significant to the late works. Knowing the significance of these two late-style personae illuminates Schumann's passion concerning the relationship between art and life.

Second, this chapter considers Schumann's contribution, as part of an important artistic endeavor in art and literature, to the important concept of *das Ewig-Weibliche* (the eternally feminine), which emphasized the redemptive power, self-cultivation, and self-development of the young woman and was a widely held perspective of the day. This section examines Schumann's purpose for composing Op. 104 in terms of audience and performer. Finally, this chapter treats issues of feminism in a general sense. Schumann does not identify Elisabeth Kulmann by name in the textual epigraphs of Op. 104. The non-specific nature with which the composer acknowledges

certain qualities may then be interpreted as teachings for every woman or every girl. In another late cycle, *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart*, Op. 135 Schumann emphasizes some of the same qualities in Mary Stuart as he did in Elisabeth Kulmann. Recently scholars have focused on Schumann's regard for women in his 1840 cycle *Frauenliebe und -leben*.<sup>3</sup> Some of the themes addressed by recent articles resonate in the later cycles as well. This final portion reconsiders Schumann's ideas about the woman's role in society in the context of nineteenth-century feminist ideals.<sup>4</sup>

### Elisabeth Kulmann (1808-1825)

Between May 30 and June 11, 1851, Schumann composed twelve songs on texts by Elisabeth Kulmann. These settings were published that same year as *Mädchenlieder*, Op. 103 and *Sieben Lieder*, Op. 104.<sup>5</sup> Kulmann's teacher, Karl Friedrich von Großheinrich, published her work in St. Petersburg in 1835 and may have been more involved in editing her poetry than Schumann realized.<sup>6</sup> The main body of Kulmann's work may be found in her *Poetische Versuche*, which consists of developed poetic cycles. There is evidence of fairy tales in Russian and German in Kulmann's

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<sup>3</sup> See Ruth Solie, "Whose Life? The Gendered Self in Schumann's *Frauenliebe* Songs," in *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, ed. Steven Paul Scher (New York: Cambridge University, 1992), 247-269; Kristina Muxfeldt, "Frauenliebe und Leben Now and Then," *Nineteenth Century Music* 25 no. 1 (Summer 2001): 27-48.

<sup>4</sup> See Karen Offen, *European Feminisms 1700-1950: A Political History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 77-250.

<sup>5</sup> In the *Haushaltbuch*, Schumann recorded reading Kulmann's poetry on May 28 and 29, 1851. He stated that he composed twelve Kulmann songs, which means that one was not published with either Op. 103 (four songs) or Op. 104 (seven songs). *Tagebuch* 2, pp. 562-564.

<sup>6</sup> Olga Lossewa, who has studied the life and works of Elisabeth Kulmann extensively, questioned whether the poetry represented in Großheinrich's publications was really by the young poet, Elisabeth Kulmann. According to Lossewa, what is certain is that Kulmann wrote around 1000 poems all translated into German. Although Kulmann was fluent in German, it is unclear whether she provided the translations or if her teacher did. See Olga Lossewa, "Neues über Elisabeth Kulmann," *Schumann Forschungen: Schumann and his Poets* (1991): 77-86.

own handwriting, but many works (such as her poetic attempts in Italian, Russian fairy tales, and numerous translations) were not published and cannot be traced today.

Kulmann's posthumously published poetry, however, was not intended for the public. Instead, these poems were a private outpouring meant for herself, her family, and her friends. Only after her death did Großheinrich collect, publish, and edit her works. At the very least, the titles to Kulmann's poems were created by Großheinrich rather than Kulmann, and are thus of limited or questionable validity as distillations of the poems' content and import.<sup>7</sup>

Although these concerns raise new questions regarding Schumann's interest in the identity of the poetic voice that speaks in Kulmann's poetry, he had no reason to suspect, when he set the texts to music, that Großheinrich tainted Kulmann's poetry in any way. While the authorial controversy that Lossewa and others<sup>8</sup> argue is important to acknowledge, it is also essential to approach the life and works of Kulmann as Schumann did in 1851. Schumann considered Kulmann a *Wunderkind* whose artistic stature was even more significant because of her youth, her premature death, and her significant output. He also considered the identity of his Düsseldorf audience and those who would learn from Kulmann's poetry through his musical settings. Further, Schumann considered the performer's identity and made certain that his musical presentation of the poetry was accessible to those who would most identify with the meaning of the words.

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<sup>7</sup> See Lossewa. "Neues über Elisabeth Kulmann."

<sup>8</sup> Helmut Schanze argued that "handwriting comparisons lead one to suspect that Großheinrich, whether from misplaced editorial ambition or from secret vanity, revised and falsified Kulmann's literary works, even including her manuscripts." See Helmut Schanze, ed, *Robert Schumann New Edition of the Complete Works: Literary Text Used in Solo Songs, Part Songs, and Works for Vocal Declamation Series VIII: Supplements Volume 2* (Mainz: Schott, 2002), 263.

When Schumann composed the Kulmann songs, he had served as Municipal Director in Düsseldorf for eight months, and his duties varied greatly from conducting the city orchestra and chorus to overseeing music on certain feast days at the city's two large Catholic churches. In addition to these public duties, Schumann was concerned, also, with instrumental and vocal music making in homes and in other private venues. For instance, he founded a singing group that met in people's homes where participants sang music composed by Palestrina, Lassus, and Sebastian Bach. Additionally, he organized a musical group that performed instrumental chamber music each week. Schumann's focus on performance in private settings as well as compositions of the past shows his interest in music as a means of education. The intended beneficiary of this education was the musical amateur.<sup>9</sup>

Commentators and musicians have often misinterpreted Op. 104 and other late cycles by overlooking Schumann's keen interest in his audience and his treatment of music as a pedagogical tool. Part of the negative reception that Op. 104 received was a result of the typical prejudice that many of the late works of Schumann encountered. There are four main reasons for the negative reviews of Op. 104. First, the alleged compositional weakness of the pieces is considered a direct result of the supposed weakness of Elisabeth Kulmann's texts. Second, Schumann's enthusiasm for these poems is considered symptomatic of impaired judgment due to mental illness. Third, the music itself is considered to be sub-standard, especially when one compares it to earlier Schumann songs. And, fourth, the text and the music present certain contradictions in

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<sup>9</sup> For more information on Schumann's desire to educate through music, see John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a 'New Poetic Age.'* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 439-446. Daverio argued that the vocal and chamber groups that Schumann organized in Düsseldorf "attest to the importance Schumann continued to place on musical *Bildung*, on edification through the medium of music" (p. 446).



their simplicity or, on the other hand, their complexity. Some argue that the Kulmann songs are not worthy of attention because they are too simple and child-like, while others claim that the poetry exudes a disturbing complexity that generates an irregularity of musical diction in Schumann's music.

Schumann scholar Ulrich Mahlert addresses each of these criticisms and demonstrates through a close study of the music how to better understand Kulmann's message through Schumann's musical poetry.<sup>10</sup> To take Mahlert's argument a step further, one may consider Schumann's purpose in composing this cycle, which is directly related to the textual dedications and epigraphs that Schumann included before and after each song in Op. 104. The next section explores these texts in terms of their meaning to Schumann and his audience, their relationship to the musical presentation of the cycle, and Schumann's interpretation of Kulmann's life as a poetic statement. In addition, the next section reveals two important voices that permeate Schumann's late works: Schumann as "communicator" (to audiences and performers alike) and Schumann as "pedagogue."

#### The Textual Dedications to the Songs of Op. 104

Figure 4.1 shows Schumann's textual additions to *Sieben Lieder*, Op. 104. In the dedication that precedes the cycle Schumann described Kulmann as "wondrously gifted" despite her young age.

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<sup>10</sup> See Ulrich Mahlert, "Zu Schumanns Liedern nach Gedichten von Elisabeth Kulmann, Op. 104," *Schumann Forschungen: Schumann in Düsseldorf* (1988): 119-140.

*Figure 4.1. Textual Additions to Op. 104*

Widmung.

Es sind diese schlichten Lieder dem Andenken eines Mädchens gewidmet, das schon lange nicht mehr unter uns weilt, das die Wenigsten wohl kaum dem Namen nach kennen. Und doch sie war vielleicht eines jener wunderbarbegabten Wesen, wie sie nur selten, nach langen Zeiträumen auf der Welt erscheinen. Der Weisheit höchste Lehren, in meisterhaft dichterischer Vollendung zur Aussprache gebracht, erfährt man hier aus Kindesmund, und wie ihr Leben im stillen Dunkel ja in tiefster Armuth hingefristet zur reichsten Seligkeit sich entfaltet, das muss man in ihren Dichtungen selbst nachlesen. Ein nur annäherndes Bild ihres Wesens können diese wenigen, aus tausenden ausgewählten kleinen Liedern, unter denen überhaupt nur wenige sich zur Composition eignen, nicht geben. War ihr ganzes Leben Poesie, so konnten aus diesem reichen Sein nur einzelne Augenblicke ausgewählt werden.

Wenn diese Lieder dazu beitragen, die Dichterin in manche Kreise einzuführen, wo sie bis jetzt noch nicht gekannt, so wäre ihr Zweck erfüllt. Früher oder später wird sie gewiss auch in Deutschland als der helle Stern begrüsst, der, schon vor drei Jahrzehnten von Einzelnen im Norden erkannt, seinen Glanz nach und nach über alle Länder ergiessen wird.

Düsseldorf, am 7. Juni 1851.

Dedication

These unpretentious songs are dedicated to the memory of a girl who departed from us long ago, and whom very few know by name. And yet she was perhaps one of those wondrously gifted beings who appear only very rarely on earth. The most sublime teachings of wisdom, expressed here with the utmost poetic perfection, are found here coming from the mouth of a child; and it is in her poetry that we read how her life, spent in quiet obscurity and the greatest poverty, became richly happy. These few small songs, chosen from several thousand, of which only a few lend themselves to composition, cannot give even an approximate notion of her character. I have been able to select only a few individual moments from this rich existence – an entire life that was poetry.

If these songs could help introduce the poetess to some circles where she is still unknown, their purpose will have been fulfilled. Sooner or later she will certainly be greeted in Germany too, as she was thirty years ago by some in the north, as the bright star that will eventually shine forth across every country.

Düsseldorf, June 7, 1851

Paragraph that precedes Op. 104 no. 1: "Mond, meiner Seele Liebling" (Moon, my soul's beloved):

Die Dichterin, den 5/17 Juli 1808 in St. Petersburg geboren, verlor frühzeitig ihren Vater und von sieben Brüdern sechs, die Letzteren in den Schlachten der Jahre 1812-14. Es blieb ihr nur die Mutter, die sie mit zärtlicher Liebe bis an ihr Ende verehrte. Aus den zahlreichen Gedichten an sie, ist das folgende ausgewählt.

The poetess, who was born on 17 July, 1808, in St. Petersburg, lost her father and six of her seven brothers at an early age, the latter on the battlefield during the wars of 1812-14. Only her mother, whom she revered and loved until she died, survived. The following poem has been selected from the many that were addressed to her mother.

Paragraph that precedes Op. 104 no. 2: "Viel Glück zur Reise, Schwalben!" (Good luck on your journey, swallows!):

Obwohl deutscher Herkunft, und in deutscher Sprache wie ihrer Muttersprache dichtend, ist die Dichterin eine warme Patriotin; an unzähligen Stellen preist sie die Schönheiten des nordischen Himmels. Das folgende Gedicht ist ein Beleg dazu.

Although she was of German origin and wrote in German as well as her mother tongue, the poetess remained an ardent patriot; many passages in her writings praise the beauty of the northern skies, as the flowing poem illustrates.

Paragraph that precedes Op. 104 no. 3: "Du nennst mich armes Mädchen" ('Poor girl', you call me):

Es wurde ihr wohl von unverständigen Kindern ihre Armuth manchmal vorgeworfen, das folgende Lied ist eine Antwort darauf.

Many uncomprehending children probably reproached her for her poverty; the following song is her reply.

Paragraph that precedes Op. 104 no. 4: "Der Zeisig" (The Finch):

Ein Lied aus ihrem frühesten Mädchenalter, vielleicht schon im elften Jahre gedichtet. So reizend naive enthalten die Dichtungen jener Zeit an die Hundert. Auf das tiefste spiegelt sie überall die Wirklichkeit ab.

A song written when she was a young girl, perhaps in her eleventh year. Around a hundred of other poems written at this time are similarly naïve and charming. She always reflects reality in the profoundest way.

Paragraph that precedes Op. 104 no. 5: "Reich' mir die Hand, o Wolke" (Reach me your hand, O cloud):

Wie oft in ihren Dichtungen beschäftigt sie sich visionsartig mit ihren Hingeschiedenen. Mit herzlicher Liebe hängt sie an dieser Welt, ihren Blumen, den leuchtenden Gestirnen, den edlen Menschen, die ihr auf ihrem kurzen Lebensweg begegneten. Aber es ahnt ihr, dass sie bald verlassen muss.

How often in her poetry, she concerns herself with a visionary depiction of her deceased family. She clings to this world with heart-felt love, to the flowers, the gleaming stars, the noble human beings she met during her brief stay on earth. But she has a foreboding that she will soon have to leave them.

Paragraph that precedes Op. 104 no. 6: "Die letzten Blumen starben" (The last flowers have died):

Ein Gedicht voll trüber Todesahnung, wohl aus ihrem letzten Lebensjahr. Sie hatte neben ihrer "Hütte" ein kleines Gärtchen, in dem sie Jahraus, Jahrein, Blumen pflegte. Auch eine Pappel stand in der Nähe.

A poem full of the presentiment of death, probably dating from the last year of her life. Next to her 'hut' there was a little garden, in which she grew flowers year after year. There was also a poplar nearby.

Paragraph that precedes Op. 104 no. 7: "Gekämpft hat meine Barke" (My barque has struggled):

Wohl kurz vor ihrem Ende gedichtet. Ihr baldiger Tod scheint ihr gewiss; nur der Gedanke an die zurückbleibende Mutter macht ihr Schmerz, den tiefsten.

Probably written shortly before her death. She seems certain of her imminent end; only the thought of the mother she leaves behind causes her profound pain.

Paragraph that follows Op. 104 no. 7:

Sie starb, bis zu ihren letzten Minuten schaffend und dichtend, den 19. November 1825 im 17ten Jahre. Zu den Gedichten der letzten Zeit gehört auch jenes merkwürdige "Traumgesicht nach meinem Tode," in dem sie selbst ihren Tod beschreibt. Es ist vielleicht eines der erhabensten Meisterstücke der

Poesie. So schied sie von uns, leicht wie ein Engel, der von einem Ufer zum andern übersetzt, aber in weithinleuchtenden Zügen die Spuren einer himmlischen Erscheinung zurücklassend.

She died, being creative and writing poetry to the very end, on November 19, 1825, in her 17<sup>th</sup> year. Among her late poems is the remarkable “A Vision after my Death,” in which she describes her own death. It is perhaps, one of the most sublime masterpieces in all of poetry. Thus she departed from us, as gently as an angel passing from one shore to the other, but leaving behind her in luminous strokes, the traces of a heavenly vision.

The most striking part of the dedication is at the end of the first paragraph: “I have been able to select only a few individual moments from this rich existence – an *entire life that was poetry*” (emphasis mine). Op. 104 was much more than an introduction of a young, obscure poet. In fact, Schumann’s purpose was to present not only a musical interpretation of the words that Kulmann wrote, but also to suggest that this young life was a piece of artwork in and of itself. Two years later, when Schumann introduced young Johannes Brahms to the world in his last review for the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in the article “Neue Bahnen,” he used some of the same language and similar dedicatory words that focused on Brahms’s youth, obscurity, and magical power. The similarity of language in the Kulmann dedication and the Brahms introduction, as well as nature-themes that appear in both, show Schumann’s similar purpose and, perhaps, a pattern of emphasis in Schumann’s last years as a composer and artist. Compare the language in Figure 4.1 with the words that Schumann wrote in 1853 of the young and upcoming Brahms who, like Kulmann, was introduced to Schumann by his teacher:

Und er ist gekommen, ein junges Blut, an dessen Wiege Grazien und Helden Wache hielten. Er heißt Johannes Brahms, kam von Hamburg, dort in dunkler Stille schaffend, aber von einem trefflichen und begeistert zutragenden Lehrer gebildet in den schwierigsten Satzungen der Kunst, mir kurz vorher von einem vehrten bekannten Meister empfohlen. Er trug, auch im Aeußeren, alle Anzeichen an sich, die uns ankündigen: das ist ein Berufener. Am Clavier sitzend, fing er an wunderbare Regionen zu enthüllen. Wir wurden in immer

zauberischere Kreise hineingezogen. . . Und dann schien es als vereinigte er, als Strom dahinbrausend, alle wie zu einem Wasserfall, über die hinunterstürzenden Wogen den friedlichen Regenbogen tragend und am Ufer von Schmetterlingen umspielt und von Nachtigallenstimmen begleitet.

Wenn er seinen Zauberstab dahin senken wird, wo ihm die Mächte der Massen, im Chor und Orchester, ihre Kräfte leihen, so stehen uns noch wunderbarere Blicke in die Geheimnisse der Geisterwelt bevor. . . Es waltet in jeder Zeit ein geheimes Bündniß verwandter Geister. Schließt, die Ihr zusammengehört, den Kreis fester, daß die Wahrheit der Kunst immer klarer leuchte, überall Freude und Segen verbreitend.

(And he is come, a *young creature* over whose *cradle* graces and heroes stood guard. His name is Johannes Brahms, and he comes from Hamburg where he has been *working in silent obscurity*, trained in the most difficult theses of his art by an *excellent teacher* who sends me enthusiastic reports of him, recommended to me recently by a well-known and respected master. Even outwardly, he bore in his person all the marks that announce to us a *chosen man*. Seated at the piano, he at once discovered to us wondrous regions. We were drawn into a circle whose *magic* grew on us more and more...And then it seemed as though, roaring along like a *river*, he united them all as in a *waterfall*, bearing aloft a peaceful *rainbow* above the plunging waters below, surrounded at the *shore by playful butterflies* and borne along by the calls of *nightingales*. Later, if he will wave with his *magic wand* to where massed forces, in the chorus and orchestra, lend their strength, there lie before us still more wondrous glimpses into the *secrets of the spirit world*....In every time, there reigns a secret league of kindred spirits. Tighten the circle, you who belong to it, in order that the truth in art may shine forth more and more brightly, everywhere spreading joy and peace.)<sup>11</sup>

Elisabeth Kulmann may have been one of the first members of Schumann's "secret league of kindred spirits." His view of her life as a poetic statement is crucial to the meaning of this cycle to Schumann. "Neue Bahnen" shows that Schumann continued his fascination with the power and perseverance of youth after he composed Op. 104 and shows a consistency in thought and purpose in his later years.

The treatment of life as art was an idea that was not uncommon during the mid-nineteenth century. An American author and a contemporary of Schumann who

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<sup>11</sup> "Neue Bahnen," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 39 (28 October 1853), 185-6 trans. Oliver Strunk, ed., revised by Leo Treitler, General Editor, *Source Readings in Music History* (New York: Norton, 1998), 1157-58. Emphasis on certain words in the translation is my own.

emphasized the importance of biography as it related to a certain artistic statement was Sarah Margaret Fuller Ossoli (1810-1850). In her 1841 essay “Lives of the Great Composers, Haydn, Mozart, Handel, Bach, Beethoven,” Fuller not only emphasized the significance of the study of biography as a way to shed important light on a composer’s work, but also she gave special consideration to the artist as forever youthful. She argued that

The artists too are the young children of our sickly manhood, or wearied out old age. On us life has pressed till the form is marred and bowed down, but their youth is immortal, invincible, to us the inexhaustible prophecy of a second birth. From the naïve lisps of their uncalculating lives are heard anew the tones of that mystic song we call Perfectibility, Perfection.<sup>12</sup>

Although it is unlikely that Schumann knew Fuller’s work, their ideas were quite similar. Schumann recognized a piece of “perfection” when he discovered Kulmann’s poetry. Perfection for Schumann, however, was not found in the poetry necessarily. Instead, he recognized perfection in the poet. Schumann intended his cycle and the carefully written epigraphs to give Kulmann a “second birth” and use her life and work as a way to teach those who performed the opus and those who sat in the audience.

Specific songs in Op. 104 find perfection in this poet and her ideals. For instance, in the fourth song of Op. 104, “Der Zeisig,” (The Finch), Schumann’s textual and musical portrayal of Kulmann emphasizes her immortal and invincible youth as well as her perfection, just as Fuller cited in general terms about the life of an artist. Schumann wrote in the paragraph preceding the song that Kulmann’s poem was, perhaps, from her eleventh year. He calls the poem “naïve” and “charming” but claims that Kulmann reflects reality in the profoundest way. Schumann shows this two-tiered

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<sup>12</sup> Strunk, 1074.

interpretation through the musical setting making the song consider both the poet's young charm and the profound way in which the composer who set the poetry viewed her life.

First, Schumann emphasizes Kulmann's youth and innocence. Song 4 (Ex. 4.1) is short, rhythmically and melodically simple, written in a miniature time signature of 4/16 and sets texts that features a singing contest between a child and a finch. Like the child in the poem, a finch is small and unthreatening, not a force that is overpowering in the least. The playful interplay between the singer's melody and the staccato, sixteenth-note accompaniment (the bird's voice) creates an innocent yet charming musical atmosphere. The first stanza (mm. 1-11 with a cadence on F major) begins with a quasi-canonic play between the child's voice (soprano) and the bird's voice (piano) heard in mm. 1-3. The bird initiates contact (the piano begins the piece with a Bb-major chord) and invites the child to play.

When the second stanza begins (m. 13), the bird decides that the game is not just a playful way to pass the time with the child, but a competition. Schumann repeats this part of the text at the end and emphasizes the competition in mm. 20-24: "wer von uns besser sang, wer von uns besser sang!" Schumann emphasizes the competitive nature of this song not only by repeating that part of the text, but also in various elements heard in the accompaniment beginning in m. 13. Compared to the accompaniment to the first stanza, the harmonies heard in the second stanza are more diverse. The song began with mostly tonic and dominant harmonies but, in m. 13, Schumann introduces a series of dominant seventh chords that lead to E-flat chords on the first beats of mm. 17, 18, 19, and 20. After the E-flat events, the original tonic (Bb)



Ex. 4.1. "Wir sind ja, Kind, im Maie" (Der Zeisig), Op. 104 no. 4.

# Der Zeisig.

Ein Lied aus ihrem frühesten Mädchenalter, vielleicht schon im elften Jahre gedichtet. So reizend naive enthalten die Dichtungen jener Zeit an die Hundert. Auf das tiefste spiegelt sie überall die Wirklichkeit ab.

## Nº 4.

### Munter

Wir sind — ja, Kind, im Mai-e, wirf Buch und Heft von dir!

Komm' ein-mal her in's Frei-e, und sing' ein Lied mit mir.

Komm, sin-gen fröh-lich bei-de wir ei-nen Wett-gesang, und wer — da will, ent-

schei-de, wer von uns bes-ser sang, wer von uns bes-ser sang!

*Da Capo ad libitum.*

R. S. 146.

may be heard as having a dominant function in m. 16. While these quick harmonic events are not unexpected, and a move toward the subdominant in a short piece is not altogether shocking, the way that E-flat fits into the rest of the cycle is important and begins to reveal the significance as to how Schumann attributes to both Kulmann's naiveté and her "perfection."

The first six songs of Op. 104 are either in G minor or its relative major, B-flat major (1-g, 2-B-flat, 3-g, 4-B-flat, 5-g ending on a G-major chord, 6-g). The seventh song, "Gekämpft hat meine Barke" (My Barque has Struggled) however, is in E-flat major when the poet realizes that she can no longer avoid death. The struggle in the opening stanza of Song 7 is with the angry sea:

Gekämpft hat meine Barke  
Mit der erzürnten Flut.  
Ich seh' des Himmels Marke,  
Es sinkt des Meeres Wut.

(My barque has struggled/With the angry sea./I can see the heavens,/The ocean's rage abates.)

At this point in the cycle, unlike the fourth song, the child addresses nature and is heard in first person. In the fourth song, nature (the finch) addressed the child, inviting her to play a game. This competition with the finch was the last struggle that this poet experienced. Then the struggle was portrayed as a friendly competition. At the same time, however, this game put an element of nature (the finch) on an equal playing ground with the child. When the idea of a competition was introduced, Schumann harmonically moved to a key (E-flat) that, perhaps, foreshadowed the ultimate competition between the child and nature (that of the final song where the child loses the battle and gives in to death). The way the child handles the idea of death in the final

song shows the perfection with which Schumann regards the child. Instead of selfishly fearing death, the child fears more for the mother she leaves behind. Her death, then, becomes a selfless struggle. She struggles for those whom she loved. The last two stanzas of the last song in Op. 104 are:

O Mutterherz, dich drücke  
Dein Schmerz nicht allzu sehr!  
Nur wenig Augenblicke  
Trennt uns des Todes Meer

(O mother, let not sorrow/Oppress you too sorely!/Only for a few moments/Will  
Death's sea keep us apart.)

Dort angelangt, entweiche  
Ich nimmer mehr dem Strand,  
seh', stets nach dir und reiche  
Der Landenden die Hand.

(Once I have arrived,/I shall never leave that shore,/I shall always look in your  
direction/And help you land.)

The perfection in death that is realized at the end of the cycle is first introduced in Song 4 when the child and the bird are placed on equal footing to enjoy a friendly competition, and the quick cadence on E-flat in m. 17 signals a beginning to this end. When the soprano sings, "wer von uns besser sang" (Which of us sang better) twice at the end of Song 4, the accompaniment (mm. 21-24) quickly moves back to the tonic of the piece in playful, staccato chords (B-flat 6/4 - f#°7 – g – c - G7 – c – B-flat 6/4 - F7 – B-flat). While Schumann begins Song 4 with the idea of the child's innocence, he also reveals the perfection that he sees in her character. As Schumann wrote in the paragraph preceding this song, "She always reflects reality in the profoundest way."

This example shows two of Schumann's late-style personae: that of communicator and pedagogue. In order to teach, Schumann composed his music so

that it was accessible to his audience. In addition, he composed so that the music was also accessible to the performers who would be doing the communicating. The 1851 performers and audience for whom Schumann worked in Düsseldorf were, for the most part, amateurs. Therefore, the music had to be playable to this particular group. He composed a cycle that was accessible to amateur singers and pianists, and, therefore, his message was one that could be communicated. Even though the music was simple, the message that Schumann wanted to teach was not. Scholars who study his late song cycles often miss Schumann's persona of communicator. They compare the uncomplicated poetry and technical writing for the voice and piano with his cycles from 1840. Instead of focusing on whom Schumann was writing for during his last years, these scholars look backward to music he composed a decade before. The problem, clearly, is that Schumann was communicating with a different audience and, certainly, different performers.

The text that precedes each song is important as well and communicates further with the 1851 audience and performers for whom Schumann composed. In the epigraphic inscriptions before each song, in fact, Schumann communicated very important ideas that point toward his pedagogical persona. The epigraph before Song 1 teaches about the dedication to family, and Schumann chose to set a poem addressed to Kulmann's mother, who was her only living relative at the time. Preceding Song 2, Schumann emphasized the dedication to country. Kulmann's mother was German and Kulmann spoke German. However, she was loyal to Russia and expressed this loyalty in her poetry. Before Song 3, Schumann addressed the ability to face adversity. In the poem, Kulmann explained that her outward poverty was not to be misinterpreted to

mean that she was poor. The next epigraph commends the ability to face reality and, by the end of the cycle, that reality is death. The paragraphs preceding Songs 5 and 6 teach Kulmann's ability to seek comfort through the power of nature. The last epigraph speaks to Kulmann's pain—a selfless pain that she feels when she realizes that, in dying, she will leave her mother behind. Schumann teaches us through these inserted paragraphs about dedication to family, loyalty to country, strength through adversity, acceptance of reality, respect and oneness with nature, and pain only through the suffering of others. In these teachings, Schumann showed his audience Kulmann's short life as a piece of art that will sustain forever.

After the final song is sung, Schumann adds:

Sie starb, bis zu ihren letzten Minuten schaffend und dichtend, den 19. November 1825 im 17ten Jahre. Zu den Gedichten der letzten Zeit gehört auch jenes merkwürdige "Traumgesicht nach meinem Tode," in dem sie selbst ihren Tod beschreibt. Es ist vielleicht eines der erhabensten Meisterstücke der Poesie. So schied sie von uns, leicht wie ein Engel, der von einem Ufer zum andern übersetzt, aber in weithinleuchtenden Zügen die Spuren einer himmlischen Erscheinung zurücklassend.

(She died, being creative and writing poetry to the very end, on November 19, 1825, in her 17<sup>th</sup> year. Among her late poems is the remarkable "A Vision after my Death," in which she describes her own death. It is perhaps, one of the most sublime masterpieces in all of poetry. Thus she departed from us, as gently as an angel passing from one shore to the other, but leaving behind her in luminous strokes, the traces of a heavenly vision.)

Schumann valued creativity and realized that Elisabeth Kulmann was a remarkable artist who, despite many hardships, remained prolific and rose above her suffering. Somehow, Kulmann also valued the more important and significant things in life: dedication to country and family. Schumann, in setting these poems, teaches these values to his audience in Düsseldorf. If the audience did not receive the message

through the music and poetry, the epigraphs helped them along. Schumann the communicator and Schumann the pedagogue was vigorously at work in this cycle.

The next section presents an even deeper examination regarding exactly what attracted Schumann to Kulmann. While the previous portion examined what the composer communicated and taught, the next part studies why and specifically examines Schumann's Op. 104 in the context of *das Ewig-Weibliche*, which emphasized the redemptive power, self cultivation, and self development of the young woman and was a widely held perspective of the day. In addition to Elisabeth Kulmann, the next section examines other female personae that appear in Schumann's late songs.

### The Concept of *das Ewig-Weibliche*

The phrase *das Ewig-Weibliche* (the eternally feminine) concludes the final lines of the second part of Goethe's (1749-1832) *Faust*, a work that Schumann knew well. This phrase took on a life of its own after Goethe's death and was widely used, sometimes even in contexts that related little to its original meaning. Although this phrase is not directly used in Schumann's Kulmann settings, the idea of *das Ewig-Weibliche* may explain Schumann's attraction to Kulmann's life and poetry and his inclusion of textual epigraphs throughout the cycle; it also may account for the simplicity of the musical settings themselves.

The importance the final lines of *Faust II* held for Schumann is evident from his decision to begin with them when he undertook his *Szenen aus Goethes Faust* in 1844. These final lines read,

Alles Vergängliche  
Ist nur ein Gleichnis;  
Das Unzulängliche,  
Hier wird's Ereignis;  
Das Unbeschreibliche,  
Hier ist's getan;  
Das Ewig-Weibliche  
Zieht uns hinan.

(All that is transitory is only a symbol; what seems unachievable here is seen done; the indescribable here becomes realized; the eternally feminine draws us forward.)

The complexity of meaning of these last lines grows even more when one considers a parallel relationship between Goethe's Gretchen, the character who epitomized *das Ewig-Weibliche*, and Schumann's understanding of Elisabeth Kulmann. Central to this parallel is a clear definition of Gretchen's role in Goethe's drama and how her role relates to the ideas of vulnerability, transcendence, and salvation. Schumann's interpretation of Kulmann's life and works responds directly to these three ideas and shows his appreciation of "the eternally feminine" in ways that scholars have not yet explored. Schumann's music portrays Kulmann's frightening vulnerability and her ability to transcend reality, while his textual epigraphs implicitly offer salvation through emulation.

Central to the concept of *das Ewig-Weibliche* is that of a duality of the role (or perhaps the goal) of woman. At the end of *Faust II*, woman is all-powerful. This power embodies woman as a vulnerable being as well as one who has the power to save—both a victim and a redeemer. Gretchen's role at the end of the second part of *Faust* directly opposes her role during the first part. In the final scene, she plays the part of savior to Faust. Goethe allows us to see both sides of Gretchen's role in his last lines by juxtaposing various ideas: transience vs. permanence, unachievable vs.

accomplished, indescribable vs. realized, and, at the end, the eternally feminine shows the way. Goethe writes not only of the power of Gretchen in Faust's life, but also the power of woman in life generally. The dual nature of this power is what makes it so profound.

Scholars have analyzed the power of Gretchen and, in particular, her choice to save Faust, who by most standards did not deserve salvation. Although the idea of erotic love has been frequently asserted as an explanation to Gretchen's motivation to save Faust's soul, other ideas that emphasize transcendence and the aesthetics of the moment seem to be a more fair interpretation of Goethe's complex character in this drama.<sup>13</sup> First, Gretchen was able to transcend her state of vulnerability at the end of *Faust II*. This transcendence or transformation, from one who was vulnerable to one who had the power to save a soul was, on a local level, most important to Faust. But Goethe, in the last lines, globalizes the idea of the powerful woman and makes it possible for this power to exist beyond his fictional character Gretchen.

Schumann recognized Gretchen's eternal qualities of vulnerability, transcendence, and salvation in Elisabeth Kulmann. He realized that she was a victim of circumstances that she could not control. Her peers ridiculed her because of her life of dismal poverty, and she lost her father and six of her seven brothers to death. Schumann believed that she was able to transcend these moments through her art and her vivid imagination. Musically, he portrayed Kulmann's need and desire for transcendence in Song 5 of Op. 104, "Reich' mir die Hand, o Wolke" (Extend your hand oh Cloud), the turning point in the cycle of seven songs. In terms of salvation,

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<sup>13</sup> See Cyrus Hamlin, "Tracking the Eternal-Feminine in Goethe's *Faust II*" in *Interpreting Goethe's Faust Today*, ed. Jane K. Brown, Meredith Lee, and Thomas P. Saine (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1994), 142-157.



Schumann exercised the composer's voice and showed, through his dedication and epigraphic paragraphs throughout, that salvation may be obtained (by the performer who performs the work and the audience who listens to the work) through emulation of the ideas that Kulmann's life and poetry personify. As Schumann states in his dedication to this cycle, "Sooner or later she will certainly be recognized . . . as the bright star that will eventually shine forth across every country."

### Transcendence of Reality

Example 4.2 shows Op. 104 no. 5, the turning point of Schumann's Kulmann cycle. It is the point at which the music and the poetry suggest a transcendence of reality. The suggestion of transcendence begins when Schumann creates a musical atmosphere entirely different from the conservative chordal accompaniment heard in the first four songs. Quickly oscillating sixteenth notes in the right hand causes an agitated, constant motion not heard in the previous songs of this cycle. The song's initial phrase suggests unrest and brings about immediate harmonic interest with the initial C-minor harmonies that finally move briefly to the tonic (G-minor) in m. 5.

Schumann avoids the tonic and creates unrest throughout Song 5. The song begins in the subdominant and does not cadence on the tonic until m. 5. Schumann further disrupts the tonic with frequent cadences on the Neapolitan (mm. 6, 7, 9) and subdominant (mm. 21, 27). Moreover, there is a harmonic struggle between G minor and G major, which further supports the feeling of unrest. The struggle between G minor and G major represents the two opposing worlds that the text describes in Elisabeth Kulmann's current struggle in Song 5. The first world, heard in G-minor

# Reich' mir die Hand, o Wolke.

Wie oft in ihren Dichtungen beschäftigt sie sich visionsartig mit ihren Hingeschiedenen. Mit herzlicher Liebe hängt sie an dieser Welt, ihren Blumen, den leuchtenden Gestirnen, den edlen Menschen, die ihr auf ihrem kurzen Lebensweg begegneten. Aber es ahnt ihr, dass sie sie bald verlassen muss.

## Nº 5.

Reich' mir die Hand, o Wolke, heb' mich zu dir empor! Dort stehen meine Brüder am offenen Himmels-thor. Sie sind's, — obgleich im Leben ich nie-mals sie ge-seh'n, ich seh' in ih-rer'

Mit Ped.

R. S. 146.

Mit - te ja un - sern Va - - - - - ter steh'n! Sie

[ 15 ] [ 16 ] [ 17 ]

schau'n auf mich her - nie - der, sie win - - ken mir zu

*p* *cresc.* *cresc.*

[ 18 ] [ 19 ] [ 20 ]

sich. O, reich' die Hand mir, Wol - ke, schnell.

*f* *f* *sf*

[ 21 ] [ 22 ] [ 23 ]

- schnell er - he - - - be mich!

[ 24 ] [ 25 ] [ 26 ]

[ 27 ] [ 28 ] [ 29 ] [ 30 ]

harmonies, is the earthly one in which Kulmann is vulnerable. The second world, represented by G-major harmonies and resolved at the end of the song, is heaven. The struggle between the two worlds may be seen in the A-flat-harmonies heard as interruptions throughout in several different guises. This second world holds those members of Kulmann's family whom she had lost, and the second world is the one to which she will travel as she transcends her trials on earth. In this song, she yearns for transcendence, and Schumann musically captures her desire in the piano postlude in m. 26 with a striking and rather surprising A-flat major seventh chord following a G dominant seventh chord on the third beat of measure 25. The six-measure piano postlude is the longest of any song in the cycle but is quite short by the standards Schumann established in his 1840 songs. The shortness, however, does not diminish its power in the context of this cycle.

This brief but powerful piano postlude is the moment at which transcendence of reality occurs. On the first beat of m. 26, the  $g^2$  in the right hand is emphasized by the octave leap upward from the fourth beat of the previous measure as well as by the *subito forte* indication. The  $g^2$  is suspended like a cry or a last effort, perhaps, to transcend the moment or transcend earthly reality. This suspended harmony does not find resolution in the tonic, however. Instead, there is a cadence on C on the first beat of m. 27 also marked *subito forte*. This strong cadence toward the end of the piece—on another key besides the tonic—suggests a resting place in another world.

After the cadence on C in m. 27, transformation from G-minor to G-major slowly unfolds as the struggle is finally resolved. One hears the power of the transformation from G minor to G major that was suggested as far back as m. 15 with B-naturals in the

right hand and, more significantly, in m. 17 when Schumann juxtaposes G major (beats one and two) and G minor (beats three and four).

### A Cycle within a Cycle: A Structural Model from the Past

Two questions arise at this point. First, if transformation occurs in Song 5, then what is the purpose of Songs 6 and 7? Second, what does Schumann accomplish with the tonal scheme of the cycle as a whole that creates a symmetrical frame with Songs 1-5 and then travels to the seemingly extraneous key of E-flat in Song 7? Third, why do Songs 6 and 7 examine events in the past tense when the first five songs were in the present? An answer that may satisfy all three questions may be within one of the first song cycles composed: Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, which Schumann knew well and alluded to in several other compositions.<sup>14</sup> These two cycles' parallels in construction and, on a certain level, subject matter, offer compelling evidence that suggests that Schumann used Beethoven's cycle as a structural model for Op. 104.

The six songs of Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* offers a cycle within a cycle (see Table 4.1a). In Song 1 a lover sings to his beloved who is not with him at the moment. Song 1 emphasizes that physical separation between the two. In Songs 2-5 Beethoven creates a musical shift in voicedness from the lover's natural voice heard in Song 1 to that of a performer. In these middle songs, the lover performs songs and reveals the purpose of the performance in the final song of the cycle. In this final song,

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<sup>14</sup> See R. Larry Todd, "On Quotation in Schumann's Music" in *Schumann and his World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 80-112; Berthold Hockner, "Schumann and Romantic Distance" in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50 no. 1 (Spring 1997): 55-132; Barrie J. Jones, "Beethoven and Schumann: Some Literary and Musical Allusions" in *The Music Review* 49 no. 2 (May, 1988): 114-125; John Daverio, "Schumann's Im Legendenton and Friedrich Schlegel's Arabeske," in *Nineteenth Century Music* 11 no. 2 (Fall 1987): 150-163.

Table 4.1a. *The Cycle within a Cycle in Beethoven's An die ferne Geliebte*

Song 1	Song 2	Song 3	Song 4	Song 5	Song 6
E-flat	c/G	A-flat	G	c	E-flat
	C: I-V	bVI	V	I	
Auf dem Hügel sitz' ich	Wo die Berge so blau aus dem nebligen Grau schauen herein	Leichte Segler in den Höhen	Diese Wolken in den Höhen	Es kehret der Maien, es blühet die Au'	Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder
	Change to "performing" voice			Repeated notes throughout	Change back to "normal" voice

when the lover returns to his natural voice, he suggests that his beloved sing the songs just heard (Songs 2-5 in the cycle) to herself in the evenings. Doing this, the lover suggests, will transcend the distance that separates them and help her to feel as if they are together after all. In this moment, Beethoven elevates the power of song as a means to bridge the distance between the two lovers.<sup>15</sup> He also stretches the possibilities of the song cycle by creating a cycle within a cycle.

Most importantly, through *An die ferne Geliebte* Beethoven creates the possibility to affect a change in the narrative space within a cycle of songs. In Song 1, the composer establishes the space that the lover occupies and the separate space that the beloved fills. They are separated either by a physical or temporal means. The final song ("Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder") refers to Songs 2-5 (Beethoven's cycle within a cycle) and not only explains why these songs exist in the cycle as a whole, but also refers back to them as a past event. Therefore, Beethoven creates a narrative space of the past. When the lover suggests to his beloved in this final song that she sing these songs to herself at a later time, Beethoven creates a narrative space of the future. So,

<sup>15</sup> See Nicholas Marston, "Voicing Beethoven's Distant Beloved," in *Beethoven and his World*, ed. Scott Burnham and Michael P. Steinberg (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), 124-150.

within a very short time, Beethoven musically and textually establishes a present, a past, and a future.

When Schumann composed the Elisabeth Kulmann songs, perhaps he was reminded of the distance between the two lovers in Beethoven's cycle and, more importantly, the ability to musically affect a change in narrative space. Like Beethoven's cycle, Schumann's Op. 104 offers a cycle within a cycle (Table 4.1b).

*Table 4.1b. The Cycle within a Cycle in Schumann's Op. 104*

Song 1	Song 2	Song 3	Song 4	Song 5	Song 6	Song 7
g-G	B-flat	g	B-flat	g-G	g	E-flat
g: i-I	III	i	III	i-I	(structural upbeat to Song 7)	
Mond, meiner Seele Liebling	Viel Glück zur Reise, Schwalben!	Du nennst mich armes Mädchen	Der Zeisig	Reich mir die Hand, o Wolke	Die letzten Blumen starben	Gekämpft hat meine Barke
				TRANSFORMATION OCCURS	Repeated notes throughout	
					Change in voicedness after transformation	

The textual content and tonal sequence of the first five songs suggests an autonomous or self-affirming cycle, one that centers around G minor, its parallel major, and its relative major. Song 6 (Ex. 4.3), the next to last song in the cycle and, also, the shortest song in the cycle, provides a structural upbeat to Song 7, which is in the seemingly extraneous key of E-flat (the central key of Beethoven's cycle). In addition, the repeated notes heard in the vocal line of Song 6 of Schumann's Op. 104 remember the haunting repeated g<sup>2</sup>s heard in the right hand of the piano part opening the next to last song in Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* (Ex. 4.4)—a passage that for some

## Die letzten Blumen starben.

Ein Gedicht voll trüber Todesahnung, wohl aus ihrem letzten Lebensjahr. Sie hatte neben ihrer „Hütte“ ein kleines Gärtchen, in dem sie Jahraus, Jahrein, Blumen pflegte. Auch eine Pappel stand in der Nähe.

## № 6.

**Langsam, mit tiefer Empfindung.**

Langsam, mit tiefer Empfindung.

Die letz - - - ten Blu - men star - ben,  
Du heh - re Ge - or - gi - ne, er -

längst sank die Kö - ni - gin der war - - men Som - mer - mon - de, die hol - de Ro - se  
hebt nicht mehr dein Haupt! selbst mei - ne ho - - he Pap - pel - seh' ich schon halb ent -

hin! laubt. Bin ich doch we - der Pap - pel, noch Ro - se, zart und schlank, wa -

rum soll ich nicht sin - ken, da selbst die Ro - se sank?

R.S. 116.



Ex. 4.4. *An die ferne Geliebte*, Song 5, mm. 1-8.

V  
190 Vivace poco adagio Tempo I 159

198

commentators shows a letting go of reality and a transition into a state of memory.<sup>16</sup>

Most importantly, Songs 6 and 7 of Op. 104 show a change in the poet's voice (comparable to that heard in Beethoven's cycle) and a change in the narrative space—from one who was vulnerable to one who has transcended reality.

The change in narrative space in Schumann's cycle occurs between the fifth and sixth songs. At the end of the fifth song, the poet transcends reality and has effectively escaped her vulnerable life on earth. Songs 6 and 7 refer to a narrative space of the past and Schumann not only musically differentiates these songs from the first five (detailed in the next section), but he also makes the titles of these songs in the past tense, as if the poet has transcended her earthly life and remembers its final stages. Like Beethoven, Schumann also refers to a future narrative space through his epigraphic insertions throughout. These epigraphs represent the composer's voice, who interprets the life and works of the poet for his audience. It is the hope of the

<sup>16</sup> See Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 166-74.

composer that his audience will learn through these epigraphs and apply the lessons learned to their own lives in the future.

### The Change in Narrative Space in Op. 104 Nos. 6 and 7

Song 6, “Die letzten Blumen starben,” is a structural upbeat to song 7, “Gekämpft hat meine Barke,” which is in E-flat, the key of the first and last songs of Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte* and a seemingly extrinsic key in the context of Schumann’s cycle, which otherwise centers on G minor and its relative major. While the accompaniment, 2/4 time signature and *Langsam* marking at the beginning of Song 6 are reminiscent of the first song in the cycle, the haunting repeated notes as well as the text heard in the vocal line show that the state of the poet’s voice is quite different—different because the transcendence of reality occurred in the previous song. The poet sings of death, rest, and loss, and from the moment of transcendence heard in Song 5 to the final song in the cycle very little harmonic activity occurs. The repeated notes in the vocal part would have certainly reminded audiences of the penultimate song in Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte*, as the lover transitions from his “performance” voice back to his “natural” voice in Song 6. The repeated vocal notes in the next to last song in Schumann’s cycle create a sound that is not of this world. The song ends exactly as it began (mm. 1-3 are the same as mm. 20-22) which makes the song sound circular—cyclic within itself. Although the poet has transcended her vulnerable life, life on earth continues.

Song 7 (Ex. 4.5) is characterized by melodic and harmonic ninths as well as augmented intervals (mm. 4, 5, 7, 16, 17, 19, and 25). Schumann emphasizes these intervals in m. 4 on the first beat with a *subito forte* A<sup>1</sup>-A (natural) octaves in the left

Ex. 4.5. "Gekämpft hat meine Barke," Op. 104 no. 7.

# Gekämpft hat meine Barke.

Wohl kurz vor ihrem Ende gedichtet. Ihr baldiger Tod scheint ihr gewiss; nur der Gedanke an die zurückbleibende Mutter macht ihr Schmerz, den tiefsten.

Nº 7.

Ge-kämpft hat mei-ne Bar-ke mit der er-zürn-ten

Fluth. Ich seh' des Him-mels Mar-ke, es sinkt des Mee-res Wuth. Ich kann dich

nicht ver-mei-den, o Tod nicht mei-ner Wahl! das En-de mei-ner

Lei-den beginnt der Mut-ter Qual. O Mut-terherz, dich drücke dein Schmerz nicht

R. S. 143.

all - - zu - sehr! nur we - nig Au - gen - bli - eke trennt uns des To - des

[18] [19] [20] [21]

Meer. Dort an - ge - langt, ent - wei - che ich nim - mer - mehr dem

[22] [23] [24] [25]

Strand, seh' stets nach dir und rei - che der Lan - den den die Hand.

[26] [27] [28] [29]

[30] [31] [32] [33] [34]

Sie starb, bis zu ihren letzten Minuten schaffend und dichtend, den 19. November 1825 im 17ten Jahre. Zu den Gedichten der letzten Zeit gehört auch jenes merkwürdige „Traumgesicht nach meinem Tode“, in dem sie selbst ihren Tod beschreibt. Es ist vielleicht eines der erhabensten Meisterstücke der Poesie. So schied sie von uns, leicht wie ein Engel, der von einem Ufer zum andern übersetzt, aber in weithinleuchtenden Zügen die Spuren einer himmlischen Erscheinung zurücklassend.

hand of the piano against a b<sup>1</sup> (natural also) in the vocal part as the poet sings about her struggle with the sea. The poet's struggle, which is musically emphasized by the stretching affect of the augmented intervals throughout, is for her mother, whose sorrow will begin when the poet's life ends. She assures her mother that she will wait for her and never leave the shore, so that the mother will find her when she meets her death.

But Schumann shows us in both of these songs that the vulnerable earthly voice that we heard from the poet has changed, and, like Beethoven, Schumann has musically affected a change in the narrative space from that of the present to a voice that remembers the past. He creates this change in voice by the eerie and dream-like repeated notes in Song 6 (mentioned above), reminiscent of the same moment in Beethoven's cycle. In Song 7 Kulmann has accepted this transcendence but her struggle is still very real. Schumann shows his appreciation for her struggle when he writes before this song,

...nur der Gedanke an die zurückbleibende Mutter macht ihr Schmerz, den tiefsten.

(...only the thought of the mother she leaves behind causes her profound pain.)

Furthermore, Schumann uses past tense titles for the last two songs, which further confirm a poet's voice that remembers. She has transcended reality, and the final two songs show her remembering the last moments of this reality. Schumann's goal is to have his audiences learn from Kulmann's suffering and pain, to sympathize with her moments of vulnerability, to appreciate her ability to transcend reality, and then to be redeemed through an understanding of her life and work by emulating who she was on earth. The composer's voice musically takes over on the third beat of m. 29 as the melody in the right hand of the piano continues where the voice (inconclusively) leaves

off. Schumann finishes the melodic line where the poet's voice could not, as if the poet died too soon (which she did at the age of 18), and someone (Schumann) had to take over and finish her important artistic statement.

Perhaps Kulmann was Schumann's distant beloved. The love and admiration Schumann felt for Kulmann was for her life and art, and by composing Op. 104, he wanted to bridge the distance between her and his own nineteenth-century audiences through a cycle of songs, as Beethoven had between his two lovers. By modeling Op. 104 on Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, Schumann alludes to a well known cycle and creates a work with which his audiences would have been comfortable in structure at the very least. Presenting his audiences with something familiar, Schumann's subject matter and his ultimate goal realized a salvation for them through emulation of Kulmann's life and work.

### Salvation through Emulation

When Schumann introduced the life and a sampling of the works of Elisabeth Kulmann to his 1851 audiences, he hoped that his cycle would impart important ideas about life and art. Because she was not a well-known poet, he used two familiar pieces of literature and music as points of departure for his cycle. First, he identified Kulmann's journey with the concept of *das Ewig Weibliche*, found in the second part of Goethe's *Faust*. Gretchen's transformation from a vulnerable being in the first part of *Faust* to that of a redeemer in the second part was a transformation that Schumann hoped his audiences would recognize in the real-life figure Elisabeth Kulmann. Using Gretchen's passage through Goethe's novel as an artistic counterpart, Schumann

perhaps felt that the familiar setting would make Kulmann's message through his cycle more accessible to his audiences.

Second, Schumann's use of Beethoven's familiar song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* as a structural antecedent gave audiences another easily recognized point of departure. They would have understood a work that elevated the power of a song to the point of bridging a distance between two people and affecting the narrative space within the work itself. In the case of Beethoven's work, the lover's songs brought the lover and the beloved together. The lover suggests that these songs, when sung by his beloved, will allow them to be together again. The power of music bridges their distance. Schumann counts on his audiences' knowledge of this power as he hopes that his music will bridge the distance between them and the life and works of Elisabeth Kulmann. More importantly, however, he hopes that they may learn from his work and be saved, in a sense, through the music and through the textual epigraphs that he included between songs.

These textual epigraphs are the key to the third stage of Kulmann's transformation (salvation) and to diminishing the figurative distance between her life and works and Schumann's audience. By invoking the familiar models by Goethe and Beethoven, Schumann hoped that his audiences would apply the important ideas he presented in the textual epigraphs to their own lives. These ideas included dedication to family, loyalty to country, strength in the midst of facing adversity, and a profoundness through a reflection on reality. Schumann's goal, like that of the protagonist in *An die ferne Geliebte*, lay in the future—a future when his amateur audiences would internalize the lessons embodied in Kulmann's life and the seven

songs of this cycle. Salvation was realized through Schumann's interpretation of Kulmann's life and works and his pedagogical epigraphs whose words were separate from the songs themselves but central to the work as a whole.

The final sentence of the last epigraph that follows Song 7 reads,

So schied sie von uns, leicht wie ein Engel, der von einem Ufer zum andern  
übersetzt, aber in weithinleuchtenden Zügen die Spuren einer himmlischen  
Erscheinung zurücklassend.

(Thus she departs as gently as an angel passing from one shore to the other, but leaving behind in luminous strokes, the traces of a heavenly vision.)

For Schumann, the strokes were the strokes of her pen—her poetry. His need to make her poetry known was strong, and he felt that his audiences would benefit from knowing her work. The traces of a heavenly vision were traces of Elisabeth Kulmann, a woman whom Schumann saw as being almost divine. She was leaving the earth as an angel, according to Schumann. Therefore, she was an angel before she ascended into heaven. He emphasized this divine manifestation at the very end of the cycle, so that this statement is the last heard when the cycle is performed. Like Gretchen, Elisabeth Kulmann was vulnerable in the world, was able to transcend the moment, and then, through Schumann's music, was able to save. For Schumann her journey was an "entire life that was poetry."<sup>17</sup>

### Feminist Issues in Schumann's Late Songs

The first two sections of this chapter identified important aspects of Schumann the communicator and Schumann the pedagogue. In addition, these sections traced

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<sup>17</sup>See the dedication, which precedes the cycle. War ihr ganzes Leben Poesie, so konnten aus diesem reichen Sein nur einzelne Augenblicke ausgewählt werden.



Schumann's interpretation of Elisabeth Kulmann's life and works through the lens of well-established literary and musical models created by Goethe and Beethoven. This final section considers Schumann's ideas transmitted through the Kulmann songs in the context of nineteenth-century feminist thought and explores common issues in another historical woman featured in the late songs, Mary Stuart (*Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart*, Op. 135, 1852). While scholars have grappled with feminist issues from a twentieth-century viewpoint in Schumann's 1840 cycle *Frauenliebe und -leben*, they have not addressed these issues from a nineteenth-century vantage point or identified possible feminist issues in the late songs.<sup>18</sup> The common issues, portrayals, and roles that Schumann gives to Elisabeth Kulmann and Mary Stuart in terms of each woman's selflessness, strength, and spirit, illuminate how he musically empowers women in general through his musical and poetic statements in these two late song cycles.

### Feminisms in the Nineteenth Century<sup>19</sup>

Feminist activity corresponded directly to the frequent political agitation that plagued nineteenth-century Europe. After the French Revolution (1789-1792) and counterrevolution (1830), there was a strong movement to repress any kind of feminist progress. Feminist action was considered "reformist" and therefore was prohibited by

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<sup>18</sup> See Ruth A. Solie, "The Gendered Self in Schumann's *Frauenliebe*," in *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, ed. Steven Paul Scher (New York: Cambridge University, 1992), pp. 219-40; Kristina Muxfeldt, "Frauenliebe und Leben Now and Then," *Nineteenth Century Music* 25 no. 1 (Summer, 2001): 27-48.

<sup>19</sup> This discussion draws primarily on the work of Karen Offen, who identifies two main types of feminism that existed in the nineteenth century; individualist feminism and relational feminism. The second is the one that most applies to the present study. See Karen Offen, *European Feminisms 1700-1950: A Political History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Karen Offen, "Contextualizing the Theory and Practice of Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Europe (1789-1914)," in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. Renate Bridenthal, Susan Mosher Stuard, and Merry E. Wiesner (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 327-355.

authorities during times of political tension. The general devaluing of women during this time period severely restricted married women, excluded them from participating in governmental matters, and forbade their academic participation at universities. Religious leaders from all denominations emphasized the domesticity and subordinate role in the household of women and discouraged the reading of feminist publications. Anti-feminist publications surfaced during this time that attempted to demonstrate woman's intellectual incapability in important matters outside of the home.<sup>20</sup> As a result, female literary figures such as Germaine de Staël, George Sand (pseudonym of Amantine-Lucile-Aurore Dupin, Baroness Dudevant), and Charlotte Brontë surfaced as part of a collective resistance to male domination.

Several factors, however, led to the failure of the antifeminist movement and the general repression of progressive thinking about woman's valued role in society. First, there was a general rise in literacy and education of women. Second, newly unified nations embraced symbolic representations that were feminine (France – Goddesses of Liberty, England – Helvetia, Hibernia just to name two).<sup>21</sup> Third, feminists organized into national societies. In greater numbers there was a stronger power and a louder collective voice. Fourth, women began to work outside of the home, which led, eventually, to new discrimination in the workplace (pay differences between men and

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<sup>20</sup> See Karen Offen, *European Feminisms 1700-1950*, p. 78; Karin Hausen, "Family and Role-Division: The Polarisation of Sexual Stereotypes in the Nineteenth Century," in *The German Family*, ed. Richard J. Evans and W. R. Lee (Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes and Noble, 1981).

<sup>21</sup> See Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle: Republican Imagery and Symbolism in France, 1789-1880*, trans. Janet Lloyd (London: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Ian Jeffrey, Isabelle Julia, and Alain Sayag, eds., *La France: Images of Woman and Ideas of Nation, 1789-1989* (London: South Bank Center, 1989); Georg Kreis, *Helvetia – im Wandel der Zeiten: Die Geschichte einer nationalen Repräsentationsfigur* (Zürich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 1991).

women and sexual harassment). As a result, women wanted a fair reevaluation of their domestic duties.

The reevaluation took place primarily from 1820 to 1848 and is now known as relational feminism. Relational feminism accepts a division of role between the man and the woman but acknowledges the importance of the existence of the woman in marriage and motherhood. At the same time, relational feminism places importance on women as full citizens of the nation and on a solid education for the woman outside of the home. This particular kind of feminism was not just about equal rights or individual freedom. It emphasized community and woman's role in that community. Women, according to these thinkers, were to contribute to the unity of the whole. Furthermore, relational feminism directly opposed individualist feminism, which emphasized the woman as an individual distinct from the man and the child. Individualist feminism presented a combative relationship between the woman and the man. In this view, society was not primarily male-centered; rather, males and females had specific, non-interchangeable roles. The relationship between the male and the female in this sense was both complementary and interdependent. One of the most important roles for the woman in this way of thinking was that of motherhood. Relational feminism viewed women in the context of their relationships with others, and the most basic and important social and political unit was the family. The family had to be a cohesive unit in order for other parts of society to work in harmony, especially at the highest level, the nation itself.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See Offen, *European Feminisms* and Offen, "Contextualizing."

## Two Woman-Centered Cycles in the Context of Relational Feminism

Relational feminism was the feminism that most affected Robert Schumann in his presentation of female characters in his late song cycles. Besides *Sieben Lieder von Elisabeth Kulmann*, Op. 104 (1851), which featured the life and works of Elisabeth Kulmann, Schumann portrayed one other woman's life in 1852: Mary Stuart in *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart*, Op. 135. First, Schumann's devotion of an entire song cycle to the life and works of a woman during the 1850's was significant. Despite the obvious differences between Elisabeth Kulmann and Mary Stuart as historical figures, Schumann's presentation of their lives was similar—especially if one focuses on these two cycles through a relational feminist lens. This section first explores Schumann's Mary Stuart songs and provides important background information. Also, this part examines ways in which Schumann established melodic and harmonic cyclicity throughout the five songs. The section then explores and compares Kulmann's and Stuart's roles in society. It specifically focuses on Schumann's presentation of their relationships with family and society and then compares their attitudes toward their own deaths. Finally, these two women's roles are examined as they affect community unity (the "community" here would be different for both women, but the common theme is present) and through ideas of national unity.

### Exploring Cyclicity through Melodic, Harmonic, and Textual Means in Op. 135

In 1852, four years before his death, Schumann wrote his final songs, which highlighted five important events in the life of Mary, Queen of Scots. Schumann used texts from the collection of poetry translated by Gisbert Freiherr von Vincke, called *Rose*

*und Distel*. Mary Stuart herself may have written the texts for Songs 3 and 4, but the authorship of the remaining songs is even more questionable.<sup>23</sup> In any event, the narrative creates a five-part story that is coherent and unifies the piece as a whole. Furthermore, it explores Mary's important relationships with her country, child, Queen, world, and God.

Even though Schumann does not call this collection a cycle, he establishes cyclicity through melodic, harmonic, and textual means. Schumann's creation of a coherent cycle in Op. 135 chronicles Mary's physical and emotional journey through specific events in her life. Her journey is marked by an important transformation between her desire to live and her acceptance of death. Schumann shows this important transformation through opposing musical features throughout: subdominant harmony instead of dominant, plagal cadences instead of authentic, and downward semitone motion instead of upward semitone motion between scale degrees 7 and 8. Taking a (relational) feminist stance and musically creating important binary oppositions, Schumann uplifts the memory of this historical woman and uses emotional and musical themes similar to those he used with the young poet Elisabeth Kulmann in Op. 104 a year before.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See Helmut Schanze, ed., *Robert Schumann Neue Ausgabe Sämtlicher Werke* (Schott: Mainz, 2002), Series VIII: Supplements Volume 2, pp. 419-20; Edward Phillips, "The Mary Stuart Songs of Robert Schumann: Key as an Aspect of Cycle," in *Canadian Association of University Schools of Music* 9 no. 2 (Fall 1979): 82-89, 91-99.

<sup>24</sup> For an in depth study of musical "binary oppositions" especially in the music of Brahms, see Margaret Notley, "Plagal Harmony as Other: Asymmetrical Dualism and the Instrumental Music of Brahms," *The Journal of Musicology* 22 no. 1 (2005), 90-130.

## Musical Cyclicity and Emotional Dualism

One of the most striking melodic features of Schumann's Mary Stuart songs is a two-note motive descending by half step that recurs throughout the entire cycle. The semitone motion that one would expect would be that of an upward motion between scale degrees 7 and 8. Schumann melodically establishes an expectation for this downward semitone motive – a binary opposite of semitone motion one would expect - to be heard at the beginning and ending of each song. When the motive is not heard, its absence makes a musical impact. The motive is a way that Schumann connects the five songs of this cycle and is a way that he establishes Mary's psychological journey throughout her life. The absence of the motive, in "Abschied von der Welt," (Song 4) establishes a turning point in Mary's physical and emotional journey. This turning point is the goal of the cycle and the one during which Mary's emotional transformation takes place.

The melody in the right-hand piano part of the first measure of Song 1, "Abschied von Frankreich," may be heard polyphonically with an emphasis on the first and last notes of each sixteenth-note-grouping (Ex. 4.6). The *g<sup>1</sup>-f-sharp<sup>1</sup>* leading into beat two is the first occurrence of the downward half-step motive heard throughout the cycle. Table 4.2 shows the twelve occurrences of this motive in Song 1, as the text describes Mary's departure from France, a place and time that represented peace and stability for the young queen, both at the point the boat initially took her away and then, much later, as she found herself searching in vain for emotional and physical stability.

Ex. 4.6. "Ich zieh' da hin da hin!" (Abschied von Frankreich), Op. 135 no. 1.

2 (90)

## Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart.

Aus einer Sammlung altenglischer Gedichte

übersetzt von Gisbert Freiherrn Vincke,

für eine Singstimme mit Pianoforte

Schumann's Werke.

ROBERT SCHUMANN.

Op. 135.

Serie 13. No 34.

### Abschied von Frankreich.

No 1.

Componirt 1852.

Ziemlich langsam.

Ich zieh' da hin, da -

hin! A - de, mein früh - lich Fran - ken -

land, wo ich die lieb - ste Hei - math fand; du

- meiner Kind - heit Pfle - ge - rin! A - de, du Land, du

Stich und Druck von Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig.

R. S. 152.

Ausgegeben 1885.

schö - ne Zeit, mich trennt das Boot vom Glück so weit! Doch trägt's die

*cresc.*

[9] [10] [11]

Häl - te nur von mir, ein Theil für im - mer blei - bet dein, mein fröh - lich

*sf*

[12] [13] [14]

Land, der sa - ge dir, des an - dern ein - ge - denk zu sein! A -

*sf*

[15] [16] [17]

de, a - de!

[18] [19] [20]



Table 4.2. Downward Half-Step Motion in “Abschied von Frankreich”

Measure	Motive	Text (if any)
1	$g^1-f\sharp^1$	Piano only
3	$g^1-f\sharp^1$	Piano only
4	$g^1-f\sharp^1$	(fröh)lich-Fran(ken) - cheerful Frankish (land)
6	$c^2-b^1$	Liebste – dearest (land)
7	$c^2-b^1$	Meiner – my (childhood’s nurse)
12	$a^1-g\sharp^1$	von mir – (half) of me
14	$g^1-f\sharp^1$	mein – my (cheerful land)
15	$g^1-f\sharp^1$	der da – that part (the half that stays with the land)
16-17	$g^1-f\sharp^1$	zu sein – (of the other mindful) to be
19	$g^1-f\sharp^1$	Piano only
20 (final measure of the piece)	$c^2-b^1$	Piano only

The significance of this motive in Song 1 is that of a struggle between the forward-moving piano and the reluctance of the voice. The first two notes of the vocal line, “Ich zieh,” (I go) are sung to  $f$ -sharp $^1$ - $g^1$ : an upward half-step motion and a motive that may be heard as an antithesis of the original motive of a downward half step. The piano propels the motion forward away from France while the voice sings, “I go,” but clearly is reluctant to be in accord with the piano’s initial statement. Schumann presents this juxtaposition of upward and downward half-step motion again at the end of m. 2 and beginning of m. 3, as the voice sings  $f\sharp^1$ - $g^1$  and the piano responds immediately with  $g^1$ - $f\sharp^1$ .

In addition to this local opposition, Schumann’s presentation of the consistent downward half step creates an opposition of a larger meaning that is revealed at the end of the cycle. The goal in this cycle is Mary’s acceptance of death. This goal is one that is not expected, even though audiences would have certainly known the events in Mary’s life from their study of history. This goal is Schumann’s interpretation of these

historical events and one that he prepares his audiences to hear from the very beginning of the cycle.

Throughout the course of Song 1, the vocal line contains the downward half-step motive both set apart and against upward half-step motion in the piano part. For instance, the motive may be heard in m. 4 to “cheerful France” and in m. 6 to “dearest,” when Mary describes her relationship to the beloved country in which she spent the first nineteen years of her life. This first song is the only one in which Schumann allows the voice to compete with the piano’s upward half-step motion. As the piano contains the first and last musical statements in Song 1, one hears through Schumann’s musical voice, that fate will prevail and, perhaps, a fate that may not be pleasant. The final measure contains the downward half-step motion ( $c^2-b^1$ ) accompanied by a weak cadence on E-minor.

After establishing an expectation for the downward half-step motive, its absence is rather striking. Schumann begins and ends Songs 1, 2, 3, and 5 with this motive, which establishes a pattern and brings about a specific musical expectation. The recurring sound of the downward half step is a melodic aspect of these five songs that unifies them. However, Schumann creates a striking moment at the beginning of Song 4, “Abschied von der Welt,” (Ex. 4.7) when the piano begins with downward motion but does not emphasize a single downward half step as it had in the previous songs. In fact, the absence of any harmonic support for these first four notes further separates this opening from the initial measures of Songs 1-3. Song 4 also follows the only song in the cycle that is not in E minor. When the pianist plays  $e^2$ , the harmonic function (tonic or dominant) of this note is unclear. Like Mary at this point in the cycle, “*E*” is, in a

sense, “homeless.” Song 3, “An die Königin Elisabeth,” is Mary’s last cry to Elizabeth, who may be her only friend and only hope. At the same time, however, Elizabeth could be her worst enemy. The complexity of the relationship between these two women is musically depicted in this song.

When we hear  $e^2$  at the beginning of Song 4 suspended across the bar line without a clear meter or harmony, it is musically obvious that the letter Mary wrote to Elizabeth asking for help went unanswered. It is also obvious from the absence of the downward semitone that this song is set apart from the previous three. Mary has resolved herself to a departure from the world and, it seems, that Schumann’s music must catch up to this resolution. Mary’s resolution is the goal of this cycle – an unexpected goal – and one for which Schumann prepared us from the beginning with his unexpected downward semitone motives. While the music propelled the voice forward in Song 1, the voice must encourage the music forward in Song 4. Mary sings that her heart has died for earthly desire, but, musically, we do not hear the acceptance of this death, and therefore, this departure, until mm. 7, 8, and 9. Furthermore, while the downward half-step motion is heard ( $c^2-b^1$ ) in the voice from mm. 1-2, this motion is not as featured in the accompaniment as it has been in Songs 1-3. Instead, the downward half-step is incorporated in a general downward motion from  $e^2$  to  $g^1$  in the right hand piano part from the pick up to m. 1 to m. 2, as if the music has accepted the motive as Mary accepts her fate.

Mary remembers (Song 1) the feeling of departure. When she was nineteen, her departure from France marked a time that signified a departure from happiness. The departure described in Song 4 is a departure from the world, not necessarily from

Ex. 4.7. "Was nützt die mir" (Abschied von der Welt), Op. 135 no. 4.

(95) 7

**№ 4.**  
**Abschied von der Welt.**

*Langsam.*

Was nützt die mir noch zu-ge-mess-ne Zeit? Mein Herz er-

starb für ir-di-sches Be-geh-ren, nur Lei-den soll mein Schat-ten nicht ent-

beh-ren, mir blieb al-lein die To-des-freu-dig-keit. Ihr

Freun-de lasst von eu-rem Neid: mein Herz ist ab-gewandt der Ho-heit Eh-ren, des

Schmerzes Ü-bermass wird mich ver-zehren bald geht mit mir zu Gra-be Hass und Streit.

R. S. 152.

Ihr Freun - de, die ihr mein ge - denkt in Lie - be, er - wägt und

[ 19 ] [ 20 ] [ 21 ]

glaubt, dass oh - ne Kraft und Glück kein gu - tes Werk mir zu voll - en - den blie - be.

[ 22 ] [ 23 ] [ 24 ]

So wünscht mir bess' - re Ta - ge nicht zu - rück, und weil ich

[ 25 ] [ 26 ] [ 27 ]

schwer ge - stra - fet werd' hie - nie - den, er - fleht mir mei - nen Theil am ew' - gen Frie -

[ 28 ] [ 29 ] [ 30 ] [ 31 ]

- den!

[ 32 ] [ 33 ] [ 34 ] [ 35 ]

happiness. Mary realizes in Song 4 that the only way she may achieve happiness and resolve is through death.

The trance-like beginning heard through the piano and voice is one where the music and words have not reached similar conclusions. We hear Schumann's reluctance to accept this fate through the absence of the familiar and expected downward half-step motive as well as the harmonic and rhythmic ambiguity of the first four notes heard in the piano. At the moment when Mary sings "Todesfreudigkeit" (joyousness of death) in mm. 8-9, we hear in the voice and piano two occurrences of the motive ( $f^1-e^1$  and  $e^1-d\sharp^1$ ) accompanied by tritone movement from  $F$  to  $B$  from the third beat of m. 8 to the first beat of m. 9. Following this dramatic moment, we hear a repeat of the opening phrase. This time, however, the four notes heard at the beginning of the song are harmonized and the ambiguity, or perhaps, reluctance to accept the departure from the world, is gone. The voice defined the terms on which the departure was based in mm. 8 and 9. The music accepts these terms in mm. 9-10.

Schumann anticipated this climatic moment from the very beginning of the cycle, when he established familiarity through a repetition of the downward half-step motive. This motive was a binary opposite to upward semitone motion between scale degrees 7 and 8 that may have been musically expected. He sets Song 4 apart by the absence of this motive at the beginning in the piano to accentuate the moment in Mary's life when she finally finds the answer to the problem presented in Song 1. In Song 1, France represented happiness for Mary. Not having ever been able to recapture the stability and security that she experienced during her early years, Mary realized in Song 4 that only in death would she be content. Schumann reveals this decision, in part, through

the melodic means so far described in this section. Schumann further reveals Mary's emotional reversal through harmonic means that will be explored in the next section.

#### Recurring Harmonic Motion from Tonic to Subdominant

Similar to the effect that the downward semitone motion has, emphasis on the subdominant and plagal cadences creates a binary opposition to emphasis on the dominant and authentic cadences, which are more conventional and expected. Schumann illustrates Mary's emotional journey toward an acceptance and, even, a welcoming of death through a recurring emphasis on the subdominant in this cycle in two ways. First, throughout the five songs, there is recurring I-IV and IV-I motion. Second, Schumann tonicizes IV by transforming I into V7/IV—a common modulating tool, but one that has an important effect in this particular cycle. The nature of both of these harmonic conditions, which center on the subdominant, are important as they relate to Mary's inner struggle and her acceptance of her own death. By emphasizing the subdominant in these two ways, Schumann is devaluing or subverting the strength of the tonic and actively confusing the role of key of each song. He compounds this ambiguity of the tonic by the key scheme of the cycle as a whole. The middle song (Song 3) is in A-minor (the subdominant), while the remaining four songs are in E-minor. The struggle heard between E and A throughout the cycle relates directly to Mary's struggle for physical and emotional peace. The emphasis on the subdominant shows that Mary's acceptance of death at the end of the cycle was a transformation that may not have been altogether expected. This acceptance was Schumann's interpretation of the end of her life.

Table 4.3 shows occurrences of subdominant events in this cycle, which include I-IV motion, IV-I motion, and V7/IV-IV motion at critical points.

*Table 4.3. Emphasis on the Subdominant in Op. 135*

Song #	Measures	Subdominant Event	Motion	Text
Song 1	mm. 12-14	Tonicizing iv then iv-I motion	V4/2 of iv – iv6 - vii° - i6	<i>...Hälfte nur von mir, ein Theil für immer bleibet dein. (Only half of me a part forever remains yours)</i>
Song 1	m. 20 (last measure of piece)	iv-i motion (Plagal ending)	iv 6/4 - I	Piano alone
Song 2 (E minor)	mm. 1-3	1-4-1 motion in the bass then iv-i motion	i-ii°6-i-iv-I	<i>Herr Jesu Christ...</i>
Song 2	mm. 7-9	iv-i motion	i-ii°6-i6-iv-i6/4	<i>Und sei's dein Will', lass sein Geschlecht zugleich lang herrschen noch (And be it thy will, let his stock also long rule...)</i>
Song 2	mm. 17-18 (last measures)	iv-i motion	iv 6/4 - i	<i>Amen</i>
Song 3	mm. 15-16	Tonicizing the subdominant	V7/iv-iv (A7-d minor)	<i>Ich seh' den Kahn, im Hafen fast geborgen (I see the boat in the harbor almost in safely)</i>
Song 3	mm. 22	iv-motion emphasized by sudden dynamic change	i-iv	<i>(be)wegt von Furcht (moved by fear)</i>
Song 4	mm. 27-28	Tonicizing the subdominant	c#°4/3-d6	<i>dem wir vertraut (in which we trusted)</i>
Song 4 (E minor)	mm. 1-2	iv-i motion	iv-i6	<i>First two words of Was nützt die mir noch zugemess'ne Zeit? (Of what use is the time still allotted to me?)</i>
Song 4	mm. 3-4	i-iv motion	i-iv	<i>Mein Herz erstarb für irdisches Begehren (My heart has already died to all earthly desires)</i>
Song 4	mm. 7-8	Tonicizing iv	g#°4/2-a6	<i>Mir blieb (allein die Todesfreudigkeit) (Only the joyousness of death has been left to me)</i>
Song 5 (E minor)	m. 1	iv-i motion	iv-i6	<i>O Gott (Oh God)</i>
Song 5	m. 4	Tonicizing iv	vii°7/iv-iv	<i>O Jesu, (Oh, Jesus)</i>
Song 5	mm. 9-12	Tonicizing iv (a minor)	iv6-iv-i-V/iv-V7/iv-iv6-V/iv-iv	<i>(in) schlimmer Bedrängnis ersehne ich dich (in severe affliction, I long for you)</i>
Song 5	m. 17-19	Tonicizing iv	V7/iv-iv, V7/iv-I	<i>Ich beschwöre, und rette du mich! (I beseech you, and rescue me!) (last words that are sung in this cycle)</i>
Song 5	mm. 21-23	i-iv motion	iv-i-iv-(V7-I)	Short Piano postlude



While Schumann does not avoid authentic cadences altogether, he composes enough subdominant events to undermine the listener's sense of tonic and, therefore, a sense of a clearly defined harmonic goal. The first tonicization of IV occurs in Song 1 at mm. 12-14. On the third beat of m. 12, the E-minor tonic is transformed to a dominant seventh chord that cadences briefly on A minor, the subdominant, on the downbeat of m. 13. The tonicization of the subdominant is further emphasized on beat three of m. 13 by the first stop in motion of the song with a strikingly sustained D-sharp<sup>97</sup> chord sounding as the singer finishes the phrase, *ein Theil für immer bleibt dein* (for a part will forever remain yours) before arriving back to the tonic-E-minor on the downbeat of m. 14. As Mary physically leaves France, the place and time that will forever symbolize peace to her, she admits in this moment that a part of her will remain in France. In a sense, a part of Mary has died already in this moment. France and her young years in France will remain a memory and may never be duplicated. Perhaps Mary already knows this, but, more importantly, Schumann shows this fact in the music. She departs from France under circumstances out of her control and begins a physical journey away from this country and an emotional journey, which involves a constant search for a place she may safely call home.

The final cadence in Song 1, from iv 6/4-I, is answered by *E-A* motion in the bass in the first measure of Song 2, followed by a iv6-i cadence from mm. 2-3. In the context of a prayer, one would expect several subdominant events. Again, however, Schumann uses the subdominant to create an opposition to the expected dominant events and to accompany text that hopes for the future. For Mary, the future is death and death for the fallen queen is the only resolution to her emotional angst. As Mary prays to Jesus

that her son's rule be long, she ends the phrase with a iv6-i cadence in m. 9. By Song 2, it seems that another part of Mary is dead, as she focuses her hope on her son. The mother-to-son relationship is one of the most important relationships featured in this cycle, because it represents Mary's hope for the future.

The plea to Queen Elizabeth set in Song 3 is the only song in A minor (Ex. 4.8). Mary sings, *so dass der Furcht und Hoffnung Stimmen Klängen*, (so that the fear's and hope's voices sounded) to a (G7)-C-F-C (I-IV-I in the relative major) on *Furch und Hoffnung Stimmen*. At this point in the cycle, Queen Elizabeth is Mary's greatest enemy as well as her only hope. These two states of mind are so entirely opposite, but, in the end, what Mary fears the most becomes her only hope. The C-major harmony heard in m. 5 of Song 3 remembers the C-major heard in m. 6 and 16 of Song I, which refers to Mary's dearest homeland, France. Even more striking is the cadence on iv in m. 19. Schumann begins by transforming the tonic-A into a dominant seventh chord in m. 15 with D-minor established in m. 16. One expects a cadence on A in m. 19 from the E dominant seventh in m. 18. Instead, we hear a *sf* D-minor chord, a deceptive cadence from V7 of A minor to iv (D minor) as the singer sings *Himmels (heit' res Antlitz)* (sky's serene countenance) on  $f^2$ , the highest note of the vocal line so far in the piece. The arrival on D minor, the subdominant, is unexpected. The sustained half note and the following quarter rest prevent the forward motion of the song to continue. In addition we hear an F-natural, the very note that distinguishes E minor from A minor, sung by the soprano. D-minor is set apart again by a sudden dynamic change in m. 22 set to the text (*bewegt von*) *Furcht (und Sorgen)* (moved by fears and worries). Mary states that she is not afraid of Elizabeth, but of fate. Schumann emphasizes this fact by repeating

**An die Königin Elisabeth.**

**Nº 3.**  
*Leidenschaftlich.*

Nur ein Ge - dan - ke, der mich freut und quält,  
hält e - wig mir den Sinn ge - fan - gen, so dass der Furcht und Hoffnung Stim - men klan - gen,  
als ich die Stun - den ru - he - los ge - zählt. Und wenn mein  
Herz dies Blatt zum Bo - ten wählt, und kün - det, euch zu se - hen, mein Ver - langen, dann theu - re

R. S. 152.

Schwester, fasst mich neu - es Ban-gen, weil ihm die Macht, es zu be - wei - sen fehlt.

Ich seh' den Kahn, im Ha-fen fast ge-bor-gen, vom Sturm und Kampf der Wo-gen fest ge-hal-ten, des

Himmels-heit' res Antlitz nach-um-grant. So bin auch ich be - wegt von Furcht und Sor-gen,

vor euch nicht, vor euch nicht, Schwester. Doch des Schicksals Wal-ten zer-reist- das

Se-gel oft, dem wir ver-traut, dem wir ver-traut.

R. S. 152.

*dem wir vertraut* (in which we trusted). The first time we hear this phrase, it is accompanied by a vii<sup>o</sup>7/iv-iv. When the phrase is repeated at the very end of the song, it is set to a V-i cadence on A minor. It is at this moment that Schumann shows Mary's willingness to accept, and, perhaps welcome, her fate. Mary realizes that her realization of happiness and contentment may go in a different direction. Mary abandons her fear of earthly beings (Elizabeth) and realizes that she may not be able to entrust her life to them.

In Song 4, Schumann musically illustrates the relationship among foe, friend, and freedom by harmonizing a recurring melodic motive four different ways. The melodic significance of Song 4 (Ex. 4.7), discussed earlier in terms of the impact of the absence of the downward half-step, is supported further by the harmonies (or absence of harmonies) that Schumann composed to accompany the six-note descending figure heard five times (mm. 1-2, 9-11, 18-20, 24-27, 31-34) during the 35-measure song. Mary realizes in Song 4 that her struggle with fate has come to an end. The opening four-note melody played without accompanying chords shows how alone Mary must have felt in her last moments before her execution, as she sings, *Was nützt die mir noch zugemess'ne Zeit* (Of what use is the time still allotted to me?). The sustained  $e^2$  heard initially is especially striking in terms of harmonic function. From Song 3,  $e^2$  may be heard as a dominant, and in the context of Song 4, this same note may be heard as a tonic. Until the V-i cadence heard from beat three of m. 2 to beat one of m. 3, our memory of Song 3 causes us to hear the  $e^2$  as a dominant. Schumann throughout transforms this ambiguity into a powerful message by the end. At the beginning,

however, the  $e^2$  is trapped between the keys of A minor and E minor, just as Mary finds herself caught between life and death.

Through mm. 7, 8, and 9, Mary sings about the joyousness of death (*Todesfreudigkeit*), but Schumann shows that it takes time for her to accept this fate. The second and third times the opening phrase returns, the  $e^2$  is given a harmonic context:  $V6/iv - iv$ . As heard in the first three songs, Schumann utilizes the tonic-subdominant relationship to musically show Mary's struggle between her search for eternal peace and the reality of her life on earth. The second and third events (mm. 9-12 and mm. 18-21) begin in much the same manner. The words "Feinde" (enemies) and "Freunde" (friends) sound much the same in German. During that time in her life, there was a fine line between Mary's friends and enemies. Elizabeth, in fact, could have been her greatest hope or her worst fear.

The fourth time the opening phrase is heard (mm. 24-27), Mary sings, "So wünscht mir bess're Tage nicht zurück" (So, do not wish better days to return to me), Schumann does not precede  $e^2$  in the piano with a quarter rest as in m. 9 and m. 18. Instead, it is heard in the context of the following progression:  $VI-V\&/iv$  (over  $c$  in the bass)- $iv6$  ( $e^2$  heard in the right hand of the piano)- $i$  (m. 26). This striking moment marks an important emotional event in Mary's life, as interpreted musically by Schumann. The  $e^2$  heard at the opening of the song is no longer alone (unaccompanied) and no longer the beginning of the phrase. Mary's isolation is not the focus and not the end to the problem presented initially in Song 1. Instead, her feelings of isolation and her search for contentment, that Schumann has chronicled throughout the cycle, becomes part of a larger context. The search in mm. 24-25 ends, and the solution becomes obvious in the

final presentation of the descending melodic line heard in mm. 31 to the end.

Schumann shows Mary's psychological progression through the varying contexts of the phrase over the course of this song; and by creating a binary opposition to expected harmonies and melodic motion, Schumann shows Mary's unexpected, perhaps, acceptance and welcoming of death.

At the end, Mary sings, "erfleht mir meinen Theil am ew'gen Frieden!" (entreat for me my share of eternal peace!). We may note, again, the similar sound of "Frieden" with "Feinde" and "Freunde". Schumann's brief postlude transforms the descending line, which began on  $e^2$  previously, to a phrase that begins on  $f^2$  at the end of m. 32.  $F^2$  is played against a  $B$ -dominant pedal in the bass. The tritone relationship heard vertically in this moment remembers the  $F$ - $B$  melodic event from mm. 8-9 in the left hand of the piano accompanying "Todesfreudigkeit" (joyousness of death). Also significant in this last presentation of the recurring phrase is the fact that the  $e^2$  heard in m. 32 is part of a dominant pedal. The absence of subdominant harmonies heard at this moment to the  $e^2$  in the vocal line to "Frieden" is significant. Musically, the phrase continues without text, so that Mary's search for contentment seems to have come to an end.

At the same time, her acceptance of death is one that ultimately gives her peace. Additionally, her search seems to be part of a larger process that makes her death not an end to her life but, perhaps, a beginning. The difference between how she conceived this peace throughout the cycle, at least, is heard as the phrase that began Song 4 is transposed up a half step from mm. 32-35. This transformation does not occur to subdominant harmonies. Instead, it is heard over a dominant pedal that finally

resolves to the tonic in m. 35. This more definite ending, where we hear V-i harmonies instead of iv-i progressions, marks the moment when Mary accepts and even welcomes her fate of death. The dominant harmony at the end has remarkable strength by the end of the cycle, because Schumann created such an expectation by that time for subdominant motion.

### Schumann's Feminist Perspective of Elisabeth Kulmann and Mary Stuart

Schumann's presentation of Elisabeth Kulmann in 1851 and Mary Stuart in 1852 came at a crucial time for relational feminism. By celebrating two women, who, on the surface, could not have led more different lives, Schumann's Op. 104 and Op. 135 emphasized their many important roles and relationships. The memory of their pasts influenced and educated the audiences of Schumann's own present, by focusing on family, society, and death. In the end, Schumann also revealed how each woman's selflessness, strength, and spirit in her relationship to her own small world affected the nation in which she lived.

Schumann first emphasized each woman's selflessness through her relationships with family and, specifically, focused on the subject of motherhood. In Elisabeth Kulmann's case, Schumann showed how her selfless love for her mother consumed her, and her relationship with her mother revealed the most important aspects of the poet's personality. The cycle centers on Kulmann's transcendence and transformation to another world. However, the first and last songs emphasize her selfless and loving devotion to her mother, who was ill, and who Kulmann left behind when her own transcendence was complete. At the same time that Kulmann accepted



her own death, she empathized with the fact that her mother would suffer because she will have lost her daughter. Kulmann reassured her mother in the last lines of Song 7 and promised to wait for her.

Ich kann dich nicht vermeiden,  
O Tod nicht meiner Wahl!  
Das Ende meiner Leiden  
Beginnt der Mutter Qual.

O Mutterherz, dich drücke  
Dein Schmerz nicht allzu sehr!  
Nur wenig Augenblicke  
Trennt uns des Todes Meer.

Dort angelangt, entweiche  
Ich nimmer mehr dem Strand,  
Seh' stets nach dir und reiche  
Der Landenden die Hand.

(I cannot avoid you, oh death I did not choose! When my suffering ends, my mother's grief begins. Oh mother, let not sorrow oppress you too sorely! Only for a few moments will Death's sea keep us apart. Once I have arrived, I shall never leave that shore, I shall always look in your direction and help you land).

This reassurance at the end of the cycle was strategically placed, because it was the last words Schumann's audience would have heard sung. He ends his cycle with Kulmann's reassurance to her mother and begins the cycle with a poem that globalizes Kulmann's suffering, as she speaks to the moon about similar feelings. The key line in this first song is "Ich leide nicht allein" (I do not suffer alone). While Kulmann compares her deep concern for her ill mother with the moon's concern for one of her children, Schumann makes it possible for his audiences to identify with Kulmann, her suffering, and her ability to conquer her own loneliness.

While Schumann emphasizes the child-to-mother relationship in the Kulmann cycle, he shows the strength of the mother-to-child relationship in the Mary Stuart cycle.

There are two prayers in this short cycle. The second is Mary's final prayer for herself, but the first one is after the birth of her son. This prayer for his protection and long life shows her fierce devotion and love for her child. Like Schumann's presentation of Kulmann's devotion to her mother, he presents a mother-to-child relationship between Mary and her son, with which his audiences would have been able to identify. Most of all, Schumann honors these relationships and shows how vital they are. He honors the two women as well by lifting up the child-to-mother and mother-to-child bond as one that is significantly important—so important that it makes these women become selfless, as they are consumed by their love and devotion to another being.

Second, Schumann emphasizes Kulmann's and Stuart's strength through their relationships with society. In both cases, this relationship was complex and not altogether positive, especially in terms of how society treated them. Both women were, in a sense, victims of circumstances out of their control. Kulmann was a victim of poverty, which Schumann featured in Song 3. She was ostracized by her peers but rose above this adverse situation and wrote about all the riches in her life. She did not allow the circumstances in her life to defeat her and, instead, made a negative situation into one that was positive. Through Kulmann's words, Schumann teaches his audiences about a positive outlook in the face of adversity.

Likewise, Mary's relationship with society was one full of constant conflict. Unlike the youthful Kulmann, Mary is far less optimistic. Schumann does, however, show Mary's strength and resolve in Song 4, as she bids farewell to the world. This strength is the key in both of Schumann's presentations of the two women. Much as he honored their selflessness in their relationships with family, he honors their strength in their

adverse relationships with society. They both rise above the negative treatment, and Schumann emphasizes this point in the music and shows how each woman turns the relationship to one that benefits society as a whole.

Third, Schumann presents two women of courage, when he shows their relationship with death. Furthermore, he makes each woman immortal and honors her spirit through the memory of her life. In both cases, their death is an end to their striving for emotional and physical peace. Also, their deaths and the way they handle death impact future generations. Neither woman fears death. Rather, both women embrace death and treat it as transcendence from earthly life, as well as a natural transformation, that provides emotional and physical peace for which both women strive throughout their respective cycles.

By honoring Elisabeth Kulmann and Mary Stuart with a significant emphasis on each woman's selflessness, strength, and spirit, Schumann reveals, through these two cycles, how their relationships to their worlds may affect their nation or, any nation. The composer uses these two women's lives as a way to inspire strength in his own audiences, who may remember them and be motivated by their strength, resilience, and immortality. Relational feminists believed that a nation might be strengthened through family and community unity. The most basic relationship between the mother and child strengthened the community. Schumann shows his agreement with this way of thinking through these two cycles, and by honoring Kulmann and Stuart, he honors women in a general sense. He honors their selflessness, strength, and spirit and shows his audiences that these qualities may not only influence their relationships with their own families and communities, but also may contribute to their nation's unity.

While Elisabeth Kulmann and Mary Stuart were not in control of certain aspects of their lives at critical points, their personal qualities of selflessness, strength, and spirit allowed the memory of their lives on earth to achieve a special power. Their legacies and the interpretation of their personal qualities through Schumann's cycles allow parts of themselves to become immortal. Their unforgettable qualities inspired strength in the 1851 and 1852 audiences, who, Schumann knew, faced adversity. Perhaps they were inspired by the presentation of these historical women who faced overwhelming adversity. Both cycles are future-oriented. Through Schumann's interpretation of these two women's lives, he shows their desire for a better future. Kulmann's and Stuart's desires would inspire Schumann's audiences to strive for a better future for themselves through their own selflessness, strength, and spirit.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF REMEMBERING

“With the Passage of Time, Old Things Become New”<sup>1</sup>

It is the responsibility of the living to remember those who have died—not to recreate the lives of those who have passed away—but to remember with honesty and integrity. To remember a life is to accept a tremendous responsibility. In the case of Byron’s memory, as discussed in Chapter 2, biographers, friends, and family romanticized parts of his life and omitted other parts. Byron’s legacy became a text in and of itself that was, in some cases, separate from the actual life he lived and served the agendas of those who lived after he died. In the case of Byron, the recreation of parts of his life was, for the most part, very positive. His life, artistic contributions, and death were celebrated for years and years after his premature death.

A more recent life that is being remembered today is that of Schumann-scholar John Joseph Daverio (1954-2003), whose premature death shocked and saddened anyone who had met him and everyone who studied his work.<sup>2</sup> On March 16, 2003, Daverio, who taught at Boston University’s College of Fine Arts for more than 20 years, disappeared. Friends, family, and colleagues speculate about the cause of his death

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<sup>1</sup> Ancient Greek saying by Nicostratus. Translation, John Daverio. Daverio included this saying in the dedication of his final book, *Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Daverio on November 2, 2000, at the national meeting of the AMS (*Toronto 2000: Musical Intersections*) hosted by the University of Toronto. It was the first full day of the conference, and I noticed him standing alone in the hotel lobby that morning. I was in my third year as a doctoral student in musicology at the University of North Texas and had read almost everything Daverio had written up to that point. I had already decided that the late songs of Schumann would be my dissertation focus and was anxious to meet and talk with Daverio. Even though I was an “unknown” and from a university very far away from BU in every way, Daverio was warm, kind and talked with me undistracted for a long while. He agreed to have coffee with me later to discuss my dissertation plans and late Schumann in general. It was a wonderful meeting and one that I will never forget. John Daverio, the scholar, and John Daverio, the man, will continue to inspire me forever.

less and less. Instead, the life he led is remembered more and more. Shortly after his body was found in the Charles River, *The Boston Globe* conveyed the sadness that friends and family felt by his loss:

. . . known for his reliability and devotion to his aging parents . . . he was a passionate teacher who delighted in mentoring students and watching them launch careers. . . a talented violinist . . . friends said he will be missed by their children, who called him Uncle John. His first stop at his friends' homes was always the floor, where he would instantly begin playing with whatever game or toy was at hand . . .<sup>3</sup>

Recently, Boston University constructed a web page entitled *Celebrating the Life of John Joseph Daverio 1954-2003*, that features his biography, remembrances by scholars and friends, events celebrating his life, information about a scholarship fund, his bibliography, discography, and photos (<http://johndaverio.bu.edu>).

For those of us who did not know Daverio personally, we have the privilege of knowing him through his writing—especially through his ground-breaking monograph, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age,"* a large part of John Daverio's scholarly legacy. In the preface, Daverio confesses that

...the Schumann I love is the whole Schumann—not the one known to most everyone, the dreamy composer of quirky piano pieces and gorgeous songs who met a tragic end—and this Schumann, like caviar, is something of an acquired taste.<sup>4</sup>

Through the 492 pages of text in which Daverio dedicated the last four chapters to the post-1844 works of Schumann, he challenged his readers to join in his love of the *whole* Schumann. Daverio's monograph moves far away from the recreation of the late Schumann that dominated the secondary literature for years after the composer's death,

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<sup>3</sup> Jessa Russell, Michael S. Rosenwald, and Stefany Moore, "Missing BU Professor Found Dead in Charles River." *The Boston Globe* 123 no. 20 (Friday, April 18, 2003).

<sup>4</sup> Daverio, vii.

which viewed Schumann's changing compositional style late in life as a result of a deteriorating mental condition. Daverio inspires us to remember Schumann—the *whole* Schumann—with honesty and integrity.

Daverio provided many answers to questions about Schumann's works and life throughout his monograph. He also left several doors open for scholars after him to explore in the late Schumann. He once remarked about his biography, "Oh, I had to leave so much out!"<sup>5</sup> Daverio questioned the way Schumann's life was treated in the literature before his monograph was published. He also posed questions about Schumann's output throughout the book in a way that had not been done before. In this way, Daverio's scholarly contribution inspires students of his and Schumann's work to keep asking questions. At the very end of the Epilogue, Daverio described a scene at a café in Boston and asked if that particular place was "the place to recall Schumann's life? to ponder his writings? . . . to think about his music?"<sup>6</sup> He answers,

...yes to the first question, because the tragic end of Schumann's life calls to mind the devastation wrought by the plagues of the past and quickens my desire that cures will be found for the plagues of the present; yes to the second, because Schumann's writings remind me that the present is fraught with imperfections, but that precisely these imperfections may hold out the greatest promise for the future; and yes to the third, because Schumann's music may just yet inspire a sense for poetry in a largely unpoetic age.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> When I spoke to Daverio about his monograph at AMS, Toronto, he was almost apologetic about parts of the book, saying that he could not possibly find a way to include all that he wanted. It was an ironic statement to me at the time and now, since the book is so thorough in so many ways. We discussed Schumann's sacred choral works, including *Der Rose Pilgerfahrt*, which was a piece I was analyzing at the time. It was one area about which Daverio said he wished he could have written more.

<sup>6</sup> Daverio, 491.

<sup>7</sup> Daverio 491-2.

## Remembering Schumann

The songs that Schumann composed between 1849 and 1852 show how Schumann had changed both musically and personally after the mid-nineteenth century. His concept of composition—not only in the “new way” he composed the notes—changed in degree of communication. Schumann’s world-view had expanded since the second-period songs composed around 1840. He was seemingly less self-centered and was willing and able to accept a broader view of the world. In these late songs, he wanted to teach his audiences about this broader view and teach how his audiences could contribute to the overall process of change.

There is still much work to be done on these late songs—work that was beyond the scope of this project. There are at least three areas that warrant special attention that will further give integrity to understanding the *whole* Schumann in terms of his late songs. One area is Schumann’s work with Spanish subjects and Spanish poets. In 1849, Schumann composed *Spanisches Liederspiel*, Op. 74<sup>8</sup> and *Spanische Liebeslieder*, Op. 138. Op. 74 is a nine-song cycle of solo songs, duets, and quartets for soprano, alto, tenor and bass.<sup>9</sup> The theme throughout the cycle is love, and Schumann used German translations of Emanuel Geibel’s Spanish poems.

Geibel (1815-1884) was born Franz Emanuel August von Geibel in Lübeck and became friends with Chamisso and Eichendorff during his study of philology at the University of Berlin. His relationship with poets and poetry continued throughout his life,

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<sup>8</sup> See Wolfgang Seibold and Constantino Arristegui, “Kurz spanisch-merkwürdiges Zusammenempfinden”: Eine Studie zur Entstehung von Schumanns Spanischen Liederspielen.” *Schumann-Studien* 3-4 (1994): 113-34.

<sup>9</sup> Songs 1, 3, and 8 are for soprano and alto. No. 2 is for tenor and bass. No. 4 is for soprano and tenor. Songs 5 and 9 are for SATB. No. 6 is for soprano and no. 7 is for tenor.



and in 1852 King Maximilian II of Bavaria appointed Geibel to serve as a professor of literature and aesthetics in Munich.<sup>10</sup> Schumann was most familiar with Geibel's *Volkslieder und Romanzen der Spanier* published in 1843.<sup>11</sup> He drew from this collection in Op. 74 and Op. 138. In addition, Schumann used Geibel's poetry in the *Lieder-Album*, Op. 79, also from 1849, in the seventh and eighth songs. Three years before Schumann composed Op. 79, he and Geibel met four times in Dresden. No record of their meetings has been found in either man's diaries. Schumann's return to a poet he visited briefly in 1840 and to the subject matter of love is one that has not been fully explored in the secondary literature. The other issue with Op. 74 is Schumann's exploration of multi-voice songs within a song cycle. His experimentation with duets, trios, and quartets is a second area that warrants special attention in order to understand the *whole* Schumann.

The inclusion of duets, trios, and quartets in songs was especially popular during the first few decades of the nineteenth century, specifically in the works of Reichardt, Mendelssohn, and Johanna Kinkel. In 1841 Robert and Clara composed *Zwölf Gedichte aus F. Rückerts Liebesfrühling* (Robert's Op. 37 and Clara's Op. 12), which included solo songs and duets. Robert composed nine of the songs and Clara composed three. During the mid-nineteenth century, Robert came back to this idea of the multi-voice song cycle. In addition to Op. 74, Schumann explored the use of more than one voice in the late songs *Vier Duette*, Op. 78 (1849), *Minnespiel*, Op. 101 (1849), and

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<sup>10</sup> See Schanze, pp. 104-106.

<sup>11</sup> Schumann's 1840 settings that included Geibel's work in op. 29 and Op. 30 came from Geibel's *Gedichte* of 1840. Geibel's work was published after Schumann's songs, however. Schumann may have known the poetry from other musical settings of Geibel's poems, such as Johanna Mathieux's (1810-1858) (later Johanna Kinkel) *Sechs Gedichte von Emanuel Geibel*, Op. 8, Carl Mosch and Louis Spohr.

*Mädchenlieder von E. Kulmann*, Op. 103 (1851). In Op. 78, a four-song cycle, primarily about love, of duets for soprano and tenor, Schumann sets texts by Rückert, Kerner, Goethe, and Hebbel. The eight songs of Op. 101 for one to four singers set poems from Rückert's *Liebesfrühling*. Op. 103, one of two cycles that set the poetry of Elisabeth Kulmann (discussed in Chapter 4), contains four songs for two sopranos or soprano and alto. In all of these cycles, Schumann multiplies the dramatic layers by including more than one physical voice on the stage.

The third related area that needs attention and that also speaks to Schumann's emphasis on the dramatic is the declamatory style found in several of his late cycles. His turn to this style in works such as *Schön Hedwig*, (declamation and piano) Op. 106 from 1849 and *Zwei Balladen: Ballade vom Haideknaben* and *Die Flüchtlinge*, (declamation and piano) from 1852 as well as select songs in Op. 74 (1849), Op. 90 (1850), and Op. 135 (1852) may have been related to the mid-century debates about the proper way to set German poetry.<sup>12</sup> In addition, this declamatory style may have related to Schumann's more dramatic works of the mid-century including his opera *Genoveva*, *Scenes from Goethe's Faust*, as well as Byron's *Manfred*.<sup>13</sup> Another possibility is that Schumann was (re)creating the conception of the song—or, at least creating another dimension in song-composition that had been born during the early nineteenth century and deserved to be revisited at the mid-century mark. At the very

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<sup>12</sup> See Jürgen Thym, "Schumann: Reconfiguring the Lied," *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied* ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 120-141 especially the last section of the article, "New Impulses: 1849-1852," pp. 136-141. On Schumann's (late) declamatory style, see Ulrich Mahler, *Fortschritt und Kunstlied: Späte Lieder Robert Schumanns im Licht der liedästhetischen Diskussion ab 1848* (Munich and Salzburg, 1983); Reinhard Kapp, *Studien zum Spätwerk Robert Schumanns* (Tutzing, 1984); Rufus Hallmark, "Robert Schumann: The poet Sings," *German Lied in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, ed. Hallmark, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 75-118.

<sup>13</sup> Thym, 140.

least, like with his storytelling voice, Schumann was widening the generic possibilities of the song cycle.

Op. 106 sets Friedrich Hebbel's (1813-1863) "Im Kreise der Vasallen sitzt" from his *Gedichte* (1842).<sup>14</sup> The first ballad of Op. 122 also draws from Hebbel's works and comes from his *Neue Gedichte von Friedrich Hebbel*, 1848. The second ballad of Op. 122 sets Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Die Flüchtlinge," which Schumann read from Shelley's *Poetische Werke in Einem Bande*, 1844 (trans. Julius Seybt). In both works, Schumann includes the word "declamation" (Deklamation) in the title, which makes his stylistic choice a very conscious one. Scholars have identified this style as part of an overall interest in dramatic music. Jürgen Thym, for instance, associates Schumann's move toward a declamatory style in his late songs with his dramatic works *Genoveva*, *Szenen aus Goethes Faust*, and *Manfred*.<sup>15</sup> Comparing the songs to ones composed earlier or to works in other genres (opera) may not be the best way to understand them. The other danger is viewing Schumann's late songs as experimentations in various compositional avenues—avenues that would have led to a late style that was never realized.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Schanze, 161-3.

<sup>15</sup> Thym, 140. The author also gives several examples of Schumann's declamatory in songs from 1840.

<sup>16</sup> While Thym's article is very important and is one of the first to study the three stages of song composition from Schumann (the early and late are considered, but, still, considerably more pages are dedicated to the songs composed around 1840), he ends the article concluding that Schumann really never came into his own in these works—that a "synthesis" or a "last word" was never reached by him. Instead, composers such as Brahms and Liszt had to continue his work and draw their own conclusions which impossible for Schumann. See Thym, 141. For an examination of Schumann's declamatory style, see also Bernhard Appel, "Robert Schumann und der 'provençalische Ton.'" *Schumanns Werke: Text und Interpretation* (Mainz: Schott, 1987), 165-78.

## Schumann's New (?) Conception of the Song Cycle after 1848

Questions beyond the “year of song” regarding Schumann’s compositional goals may never be fully answered. Identifying compositional voices through various topics (politics, storytelling, feminism) in the late songs is a first step to realizing how the experiences of Schumann’s post-1845 world and life changed him as a composer. This kind of study may also show how Schumann’s audiences changed as well. One question, however, is, did Schumann’s overall conception of the song cycle change dramatically during his third period?

Before and during the *Liederjahr*, Schumann and his colleagues at the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* made it clear through their reviews what they understood as important in song composition. The resounding theme throughout these articles was that a composer had the responsibility to be true to the text. When Schumann reviewed the songs of W. H. Veit in 1840, he wrote that Veit

Auch Veit wendet auf die Wahrheit des musikalischen Ausdrucks in Wiedergabe der Worte die treuste Sorgfalt. Dies Lob steht über jades andere.

(Is as faithful as possible in rendering the truth of the words through musical expression. This praise is higher than any other.)<sup>17</sup>

Carl Banck was the main author of song reviews for the journal during this time. Along with Schumann, he advised composers to be true to the text. In addition, he saw the importance of the composer being true to himself. He wrote that

Diesen Compositionen fühlt sich das *Gemachte*, die *Routine*, das *Handwerk* durch; es sind die Lieder jener *geübten* Tonsetzer, die *große Leichtigkeit* in Handhabung der gewöhnlichen oder auch ihnen eigenthümlichen Mittel für *Wahrheit* der Empfindung und ihrer musikalischen Uebertragung haben.

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<sup>17</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 13 (1840): 119. Quoted in David Ferris, “The Song Cycle as Literary Work” in *Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 195.

(One feels the contrivance, the experience, the craft in these compositions; they are the *lieder* of those practiced composers, who have the greatest ease in handling the ordinary methods as well as their own characteristic methods for rendering the truth of feeling in music.)<sup>18</sup>

According to Banck, the composer who is able to be true to the poet and the poetry is the composer who, first, already knows himself and may be true to his own experiences as a person.

The songs that Schumann composed between 1849 and 1852 do not give the impression that Schumann's overall conception of the song cycle changed drastically from that of the songs composed around 1840. What did change was Schumann, his audiences, and the time during which these late songs were conceived. In a sense, for Schumann, "with the passage of time, old things became new."<sup>19</sup>

Schumann returned to something old in 1849—the genre of the song cycle. This genre was one with which he was completely comfortable, because it was one in which he could exercise his deep appreciation for both music and literature. In this genre, Schumann was able to manipulate both arts in a way to clearly communicate to his audiences. While his overall conception of the song cycle did not change, it became new, because Schumann conveyed completely different messages in a completely new manner to a completely different audience. He was able to address important issues of the day, as he voiced his political views, became an artful storyteller, and acknowledged issues of feminism. With, sometimes, a new musical language and with texts from poets who had not been so prominent during the "year of song," Schumann made his compositional voice clear and strong during a time when he and his audiences needed clarity, truth, and stability.

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<sup>18</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift* 2 (1835): 92. Translation, Ferris, p. 196.

<sup>19</sup> Greek saying quoted at beginning of this chapter.

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